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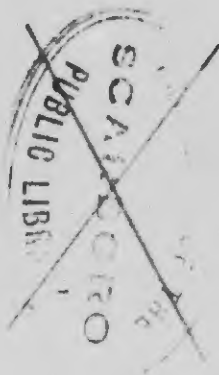
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CAPTAIN BLUITT









"Very well," answered the judge, "and here you have it." "
Captain Bluffitt]

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CAPTAIN BLUITT

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BY

MAX ADELER

(CHARLES HEBER CLARK) ←

AUTHOR OF "OUT OF THE HURLY BURLY," "ELBOW ROOM,"
"AN OLD FOGGY," ETC.

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PREFACE

MORE than a quarter of a century ago, the writer of this tale produced three or four books containing material designed to supply amusement. Concluding then that enlargement of the world's stock of foolishness was not one of the needs of the race, nor likely to confer dignity upon him who engaged in it, he turned his attention to serious matters, and endeavoured to persuade himself and his fellow-men that political economics, among secular things, embodies highest wisdom, and may bring honour to him who can deal with it successfully.

Experience and observation now incline the author to believe that very much of the material commonly received as economic wisdom and put into practice in public affairs is closely related to foolishness; while not a little of that which is looked upon as foolishness has indeed some claim to be regarded as wisdom.

He has had, therefore, an impulse to resume the work of producing literature for entertainment, in the belief that the race may find larger advantage by reading avowed fiction in which, as in real life, fun is mingled with seriousness, than by accepting, at its surface value, falsehood pretending to be fact and nonsense masquerading as philosophy.

This impulse was quickened by an experience he had while crossing the Atlantic Ocean upon a steamer in the company of a learned Rabbi. The Rabbi, after considering the case, related to the writer a story told in the Talmud Taanit 22a. It was to this end :—

Rabbi Baroka, a saintly ascetic, often received visits from Elijah, who would communicate to him the secrets of Heaven. Rabbi Baroka learned from Elijah that every one in Heaven has a companion who is exactly complementary to the person with whom he is placed. Rabbi Baroka entreated Elijah to show to him the man who should be his companion. Thereupon Elijah led him to the market-place, where a jester stood, surrounded by a multitude of people, to whom he was supplying amusement. "That is your companion," said Elijah, pointing to the jester. "What have I done," demanded Rabbi Baroka, "that I should be condemned to the company of such a man in Heaven?" "Scorn him not," responded Elijah. "By cheering the distressed and sorrowful, and diminishing the sadness of human life, that man is doing a better and nobler work than if he should withdraw from society and lead a life of asceticism and solemnity. Learn that there is joyousness in Heaven."

And so here, in this book, while there is much that shows the serious side of the human existence that is deeply tinged with tragedy, there is also comedy, without which no true story of the life of man can be told. Rabbi Baroka is but half a man; his other half is the jester.

MAX ADLER.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE MARCH OF INVENTION	9
II. WALTER DRURY HAS A VISION OF AN ANGEL	25
III. SAUL TARSEL	35
IV. IN A SAILOR'S SNUG HARBOUR	47
V. INVOLVING THE CHURCH MILITANT	60
VI. THE HERO BEARS THE HEROINE HOMEWARD	79
VII. THE CURSE OF CANAAN	97
VIII. FACE TO FACE	111
IX. TWO MEN OF TURLEY	132
X. THE HERO BECOMES A PROFESSIONAL MAN	155
XI. THE ARM OF THE LAW IS EXTENDED	173
XII. TEMPTATION	185
XIII. EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES IN TURLEY	200
XIV. INTO THE NEW WORLD WHICH IS THE OLD	217
XV. THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR	234
XVI. THE SLAVE-CATCHERS	248
XVII. THROUGH THE WAY OF THE WILDERNESS	263
XVIII. POLITICS IN TURLEY	284
XIX. EFFORTS TO SAVE THE COUNTRY	304
XX. DIVINATION AND POLITICS	323
XXI. PRINCE BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY	340
XXII. THE COBRA STRIKES	353

CHAP.	PAGE
XXIII. SUFFERING AND BLISS	365
XXIV. CAPTAIN BLUITT BEHAVES IN A SURPRISING MANNER	380
XXV. FLIGHT	390
XXVI. LOVE, THE CONSOLER	404
XXVII. PHOEBE TARNEL GOES HOME	411
XXVIII. DUE NORTH	430
XXIX. THREE TWOS ARE THREE	439

CAPTAIN BLUITT

CHAPTER I

THE MARCH OF INVENTION

ON a Saturday afternoon in summer-time, Captain Bluitt sat in the library of his house upon the river-bank in the town of Turley, conversing with Reverend Doctor Frobisher. The chair occupied by the minister was placed by the front window, and the minister as he talked rested his elbow upon the window-sill.

Glancing outward while he was in the midst of one of his sentences, his attention was attracted to a wagon that stopped in front of Captain Bluitt's gate. The wagon bore a burden of so odd a kind that the clergyman did not complete his utterance. Instead, he turned to Captain Bluitt, and pointing his finger towards the wagon, said:

"Why, what is that?"

Captain Bluitt arose and came to the window. After looking at the wagon and the queer object upon the wagon, and at the bustling man who appeared to be directing the driver, Captain Bluitt, smiling, said:

"That must be my catapult."

"Your catapult!" exclaimed Dr. Frobisher, in astonishment.

"Yes," responded the captain. "You know I had a kind of a notion that I should like to see a real catapult,—I have read so much about the machine—and a few

weeks ago, when I was talking to Judge McGann about it, he offered to make one for me. I guess he has it on the wagon. It looks like it, any way."

The clergyman seemed much amused.

"I really have some curiosity about it myself," he said. "I haven't given catapults a thought since I read Livy, at school."

"Exactly!" said Captain Bluitt. "I got my ideas about catapults from Cæsar. You know how it is; when you have read and read and read about a thing you want to see it. McGann insisted that he was thoroughly familiar with the whole catapult business—kind of a catapult expert, in fact—and so I told him to go ahead and build one."

"I have no doubt at all," said the minister, "that King Uzziah built them in Jerusalem. Refer to Second Chronicles, twenty-six."

"I don't remember hearing of that," said the captain. "So we have sacred as well as profane history behind us. If the thing works I'll lend it to you to give illustrations to your Sunday School. Here comes McGann. He wants to see me. Shall we go out to him?"

The captain and Dr. Frobisher took up their hats as they passed through the hall, and came to the front door just as McGann had his hand upon the knocker.

"I've brought that catapult around, captain," said McGann, pointing over his shoulder with his thumb to the wagon in the street. "Where shall I put it?"

"Is it heavy?" asked the captain.

"Oh, not so very heavy; four men can carry it, surely."

"I will call Rufus," said the captain.

When Rufus, Captain Bluitt's hired man, had been summoned, he was sent to seek for two other men, who, with Rufus and the driver of the wagon, should carry the machine into the garden.

Dr. Frobisher stood by the gate waiting, while Captain Bluitt, accompanied by McGann, walked around the wagon examining the catapult.

"It seems to me, judge," remarked the captain, "that

there is a good deal more in that catapult than the specifications call for."

"I know," responded McGann. "Just as soon as I began to build it, new ideas swarmed into my mind, and I introduced some of them, here and there. But you needn't worry, captain. You wanted a catapult, and there you have it. I'll bet that for all-around effectiveness the world never saw such a catapult as that before."

Captain Bluitt looked vexed and disappointed.

"That's all very well, judge," he said, "but I told you particularly I wanted just an old-fashioned catapult—a historical catapult—like Titus used at the siege of Jerusalem."

"Very well," answered the judge, "and here you have it, only with what you may call emendations. The world has moved, captain, in two thousand years, and it is hardly possible to put together a catapult now without infusing into it some little tinges of advanced scientific feeling. There are happy thoughts in that catapult of mine that would make Titus blink."

"I suppose we can't help it now," said Captain Bluitt, mournfully, "but really I don't care so much to believe that we should make Titus blink as I do for faithfulness to history. Here is Dr. Frobisher arranging to use this machine to illustrate the Book of Chronicles to his Sunday School, and how is he going to do it if you have loaded the thing down with modern ideas?"

"Well," said the judge, with a downcast look, in which still there were gleams of cheerfulness, "I'm awful sorry if the machine is not exactly what you wanted; but the fact is I'm made so that I can't work backwards towards the old things; I have to push forward or stop. But you just wait until you see the machine in action, and you'll change your mind. I want to tell you that you've got the liveliest catapult for straight business that was ever made by the hand of man."

At this moment Rufus returned with two sturdy helpers, and when Judge McGann had given directions for removing the machine from the wagon, and Captain Bluitt had designated the spot in the garden where he

wished to have it placed, the captain, the judge and the minister walked slowly around to the side of the house.

"I have applied for a patent on that thing," said the judge, as if he had just happened to remember the fact.

"Not a patent on a catapult?" said Dr. Frobisher.

"Why, certainly!"

"You can't do that, judge," remarked Captain Bluitt.

"The machine is thousands of years old. It was invented by Pliny."

"By Dionysius the Elder," said the minister.

"Well, anyhow," responded the captain, "it's a little too late for the judge here to put in an application for a patent. They'll never allow it."

"Not a patent on the general, broad catapult idea," said the judge. "Not that; but on my improved attachments and auxiliaries for catapults. They are all brand-new. Rome began the thing; Turley completes it."

"What kind of attachments, for example, have you?" asked Dr. Frobisher.

"Weil," answered the judge, "to begin with, I cushion the throwing-arm on rubber. That improvement is mine. Livy never heard of it, nor Titus either."

"Never!" exclaimed Dr. Frobisher.

"Then I introduce my Energizing Fly-Wheel, which——"

"You haven't gone and put a fly-wheel on that thing, judge, have you?" asked Captain Bluitt, with pain in his voice.

"Yes, of course; my Energizing Reciprocating Fly-Wheel, with an accumulator fastened to the crank-pin."

"What for?" demanded Captain Bluitt; "Titus never heard of such a thing as a fly-wheel; do you think he did, doctor?"

"I should hardly think so," answered Dr. Frobisher.

"I wish you had left it off," said the captain almost angrily.

"Left it off!" exclaimed the judge. "Why, man alive! that would have spoiled the whole thing. That

is the central point, the vital point, if I may say so, of my whole catapult system."

"Well," said Captain Bluitt, with some manifestation of irritation, "I ask you what it is for?"

Rufus and the other burden-bearers came staggering by with the catapult upon their shoulders.

"Put it right down there," said Captain Bluitt, pointing to a place upon the grass.

"And be careful not to twist that crank-pin," exclaimed Judge McGann. "Here, let me show you."

The judge put his hand to the machine and with some manifestation of affectionate tenderness helped to deposit it safely upon the sod.

"Now, Rufus," he said, "bring that fly-wheel and the wrenches and straps and other things from the wagon."

Captain Bluitt and Dr. Frobisher sat upon a rustic bench to await developments. The judge took off his hat and wiped his forehead with his handkerchief as he said:

"You ask what it is for; what the fly-wheel is for. I answer, it is to get Momentum! In reflecting upon this thing of catapults, I discovered that the highest degree of efficiency is attained by judicious use of Momentum. If you can discover just how many units of Momentum can be developed, I can tell you within a fraction what the effective working-capacity of your catapult will be. Now, the only way I can think of by which you can get Momentum in the best modern shape is by employing a fly-wheel, and there never was a fly-wheel tacked together that would give you Momentum as readily as my Energizing Fly-Wheel with the Reciprocating Attachment. That is it Rufus and Henry are bringing in here now," and the judge pointed to the two men, who were working their way through the front gate with his device.

"I don't see how you are going to illustrate the Book of Chronicles to the Sunday School with that thing, doctor," said Captain Bluitt, gloomily.

"I don't clear it myself," replied the clergyman.

"Let me explain it to them," said Judge McGann.

"There is no trouble about it. A child can understand it."

"Well," said Captain Bluit, "it is beyond me."

"Now, don't get worried about it and talk in that despondent way," said the judge, sorrowfully. "Wait until I open the subject out to you."

"Well, then," exclaimed Captain Bluit, desperately, "go ahead and open it out."

"I will," said the judge. "Now, start at the beginning. What do you want to do with that machine?" And the judge pointed to it.

"I wanted to know how Titus worked it at the siege of Jerusalem," said Captain Bluit, sadly, "but Titus never dreamed of a thing like that, with rubber cushions and fly-wheels."

"No," said the judge, with firmness in his voice. "What you want to do, first of all, with a catapult, is to energize it."

"Hah!" breathed the captain, not without an intimation of contempt.

"Now, how *will* you energize it?"

"Don't ask me," said Captain Bluit, looking out over the river. "You're the only man who knows."

"You start with Torsion."

"With what?" asked Dr. Frobisher.

"Torsion. That is the basic principle, if I may say so, of the ancient catapult. You get it by twisting and twisting and twisting the strong rope that you see in the middle there."

"How do you twist it?" asked the captain.

"There are many methods. Mine is to use my Energizing Fly-Wheel, which helps to store the energy in the torsion-rope. Then, when it is stored, the Reciprocating Attachment comes into play; the Energizing Fly-Wheel starts in the opposite direction, gaining in momentum, and the heavily-loaded rim of the wheel takes up the stored force in the torsion-rope. With what result?"

"I give it up," said Captain Bluit, sternly.

"There can be but one result," answered the judge.

"The catapult discharges its missile with deadly effect, and the Energizing Fly-Wheel goes right on, impelled by Momentum, and gives the torsion-rope a twist in the opposite direction. You put another missile in the receiver and a reverse action sets in, and the Fly-Wheel does the whole business over again."

"You mean that it will work right along, automatically?" asked the clergyman.

"Right along. Set it and start it, and it will act without interruption until you put on the safety-brake."

"That looks to me like perpetual motion," said Dr. Frobisher.

"Call it that, if you want to," answered the judge. "In fact it is the discovery of a new force. That is where modern science comes in. I made that discovery. The force is a combination of Torsion and Momentum, and so I call it Torsentum. My patent is on that."

"Tormentum, did you say?" asked Captain Bluitt, with a touch of bitterness.

"Torsentum; I worked the thing out on paper first, and now I have embodied it in this machine. My idea is not to call the machine a catapult, but the McGann Multiple Energizing Momentum Engine."

"Of what use is it?" asked the minister.

"I suppose," said the judge, thoughtfully, "it might be applied to many kinds of service. It was my notion, for one thing, that you could employ it to dig artesian wells."

"Titus would have blinked at that, sure enough!" said Captain Bluitt.

"If the device fulfils my expectations," said the judge, "I thought we might get up a prospectus and organize a company. That is, if Captain Bluitt is willing."

"Perfectly willing, judge," said the captain, "I surrender all my rights now. If you will take the thing away I will find a good carpenter to make me exactly what I want."

"You will want this," said the judge, blandly, "when you become familiar with it. You won't object to have it remain here, will you, until you see it work?"

"Oh, no!" answered the captain.

"The fact is," continued the judge, "I am a little bit curious about it myself. Of course I am sure that it will work, because the principle is right, but practical experiment is the final test."

"Do you mean to say you never had it at work yet?" asked Captain Bluitt.

"Of course not! I only drove the last nail at four o'clock, and I put the machine right on the wagon to hurry it down to you. You will see the first victory for this great product of human invention."

"I'll bet it won't go," said the captain.

"You might just as well bet that the sun won't rise to-morrow morning," answered Judge McGann. "I hate a man to look on the dark side of things all the time. You wait till I adjust the fly-wheel and the other appliances, and life 'll look brighter to you. Rufus, roll that wheel over here."

Judge McGann removed his coat, and taking up some of the tools that had been brought from the wagon, he laid them upon the frame of the machine, while Rufus and Henry lifted the Energizing Reciprocating Fly-Wheel to its place.

"Force it right upon the shaft," directed the judge; and the two men put it into that position.

Then the judge began to work in earnest, while Rufus and his companion stood by watching and ready to help.

Captain Bluitt and Dr. Frobisher, from their place upon the rustic bench, considered the proceeding with curiosity, if not with large hopefulness; and while they considered it, a young man of twenty-four or twenty-five years came into the garden and approached them. He was a fine-looking fellow, with dark hair and eyes, a ruddy skin, good features, and a graceful figure of middle height.

Captain Bluitt greeted him heartily and then, presenting him to the clergyman, he said:

"Dr. Frobisher, this is my nephew, Walter Drury. He has just come over from Donovan to spend Sunday with me."

When the captain explained to Walter the nature of the machine upon which Judge McGann was then concentrating his attention and his energy, Walter laughed and said:

"I was always curious about catapults. I am glad I got here just in time."

"Of course; everybody is curious about them," said the captain, "and I am delighted to have you with us; but the judge, there, has spoiled the machine, in my opinion. I didn't want an American Freak; I wanted a catapult of the first century."

"Don't be impatient," said the judge, turning his head toward the group, while his hands were busy screwing up a nut. "I'll have her all ready in a few minutes. Now, Rufus, hand me that crank-pin."

"Hold it there," said the judge, "while I put on the accumulator."

"It seems to me," said Walter, as the accumulator was pushed into position, "that a catapult must have been a rather complicated piece of machinery."

"The kind that Titus used wasn't," said the captain.

"Titus who?" asked Walter.

"Titus—the man who besieged Jerusalem. McGann's catapult would have put him into an early grave. I'm disgusted with it."

"Maybe it will be better than we think," said the minister in an amiable spirit.

"There she is," exclaimed the judge, triumphantly.

"Everything's ready. Do you want to put a missile of any kind in the machine the first time, captain?"

"I don't know. Which way would it go?"

"Any way you want it to go. I can throw a brick or a stone half-way across the river for you."

Captain Bluitt hesitated, then he said:

"I think maybe, judge, you'd better be perfectly sure first how the machine is going to behave. I don't want to mutilate any of the neighbours."

"Oh, very well," answered the judge, "just as you please; but of course I know perfectly well how it will behave; it is absolutely under control. I could hit a

target at four hundred yards every time. Now, Rufus, you and Henry take that handle and turn it round and round to the right till I tell you to stop."

"What are you doing now, judge?" asked Dr. Frobisher.

"Putting on the Torsion."

"You do it with your hands?"

"Of course; you must give the machine a start. It needs what you might call a primary impulse; then it takes care of itself."

"You believe the frame will stand the strain?" asked the captain.

"Well, unless my calculations are all wrong, it will stand four times any pull that can be put on it. It's perfectly safe. Bear down hard on that handle, Rufus; don't be afraid. The Torsion is beginning to tell."

"Where is the Momentum?" asked Captain Bluit, with the tone of a man whose faith needs strengthening.

"Nowhere, now, of course. We'll get that in the fly-wheel. Give her three or four more turns, Rufus," said the inventor, as the workmen began to show signs of fatigue, "only three or four more."

"Now," said McGann, "let me put on the safety-brake! There! you can let go, Rufus."

"Gentlemen," explained the inventor, as Rufus and his companion released their hold upon the handle and withdrew in a manner that indicated apprehension, "the machine is ready for action. Captain Bluit, you had some regrets because I did not slavishly imitate Titus; and, Dr. Frobisher, you feared that there would be diminished opportunity for instruction for your Sunday School. Fix your eyes upon this Multiple Energizing Momentum Engine—for that is what it is—and you will know in a couple of minutes that Titus wasn't in the game at all, and that if Sunday Schools want to examine the wonders of science they can find them here. Now I start her!"

The judge put his hand upon the safety-brake and released the pinion. At once there was a creak and a groan, and the Energizing Reciprocating Fly-Wheel

began to revolve with tremendous rapidity. A second later it slipped from the axle, bounded up and down two or three times upon the grass, and then tore across the lawn, uprooted several rose-bushes, dashed through the fence, across the street, over the river-bank, and leaped far out into the stream, where, after whirling the water into foam, it made a final jump into the air, and then sank out of sight.

Dr. Frobisher and Walter laughed.

"Was that the Momentum?" inquired Captain Bluitt solemnly.

Then the doctor and Walter laughed again.

"Never mind what it was," said the judge, sulkily. "Didn't I tell you, Rufus, to see that that linch-pin was in the axle? That's always the way! Any fool can spoil a wise man's work. Well," continued the judge, wiping his hands on his handkerchief as he approached the group, "what's done is done. There's as pretty a job spoiled just by carelessness as you ever saw; and I don't believe I can afford to get a new fly-wheel."

"Oh, never mind!" said Captain Bluitt, sympathetically. "I believe the catapult is better without a fly-wheel, any way."

"It is not worth a cent," said the judge, ruefully.

"I think the Sunday School children will care more for it this way," said Dr. Frobisher; "and I should feel safer in showing it to them."

"You'll just leave the machine there, will you?" asked Captain Bluitt.

"For a day or two anyhow," answered the judge. "Would you mind if I should tighten up the Torsion before we go, so as to keep the rope in shape?" said the judge.

"Certainly. Fix it as you please," answered Captain Bluitt.

Judge McGann expended some further effort upon the engine, and then, as he joined Captain Bluitt and his friends, who walked to the garden gate, he said:

"Now, Rufus, you let that machine alone and keep

everybody away from it, and I'll come over on Monday and see what I can do to repair damages."

Next morning, while Captain Bluitt and his sister and Walter Drury were at breakfast, they were startled by hearing piercing screams from the garden. They arose and hurried through the side-door to ascertain what was the matter. Emerging, they discovered Rufus and his wife standing beneath the great apple-tree, in the upper branches of which was lodged, in a disordered condition, a boy of nine years.

"What is the matter, Rufus?" asked the captain, anxiously.

"It's Archibald, sir," said Rufus.

"Archibald! How did he get in the tree?"

"Judge McGann's infernal machine threw him there, sir."

While Rufus, with a section of clothes-line, ascended the apple-tree with a purpose to rescue his son Archibald, Captain Bluitt and his companions went over to look at McGann's Multiple Energizing Momentum Engine.

The cause of Archibald's precipitation into the apple-tree was plainly apparent. The child had climbed upon the machine with the Torsion tightly set, and while sitting astride of the rubber-cushioned throwing-arm, had put his foot upon the safety-brake.

Really it was a victory for McGann; but, as Captain Bluitt and Walter and Miss Bluitt returned to the house to finish breakfast, the Captain said:

"Puella, I shall tell McGann to-morrow to take that thing away. My interest in catapults is not so keen as it once was."

On Monday morning Judge McGann called upon Captain Bluitt about nine o'clock, and found him and Miss Bluitt sitting upon the front porch, while the captain looked over a newspaper.

After greeting his friends, and accepting an invitation to be seated, Judge McGann said that he had come around to make any final arrangements that the captain might prefer for disposing of the catapult. Captain Bluitt told the judge of the manner in which the engine

had dealt with Archibald, and the judge, with a faint smile, expressive of the presence in his mind of a degree of satisfaction, said :

"Did it actually throw the boy into the tree? I told you there was original force in that machine! Imagine what it would do if applied to useful industry."

"No doubt you are right, judge," responded the captain, "but I am not engaged in useful industry, and I am not sufficiently familiar with the useful industries around here to know if any of them wants a catapult operated by Torsion. I must really ask you to take the thing away."

"Perhaps," said the judge, clasping his hands over his knees, and looking out over the river thoughtfully, "we may be able to get rid of it somehow or other; I don't want it."

"How would it do to give it to the poor," suggested Miss Bluitt.

"Could you readjust it," asked the captain, "so that it could be introduced to schools for the purpose of disciplining boys? It seemed to act very vigorously with Archibald yesterday morning."

"I hardly think so," said the judge, reflectively. "It is almost too energetic for that."

"It would be perfectly useless, I suppose, for a gas-meter, or to blow our church organ?" said Miss Bluitt.

"Perfectly," responded the judge. "Wouldn't do at all. The worst of it is," he continued, mournfully, "there is no general, active demand for catapults. You are the only man I ever knew who wanted one."

"And I don't want this one," said Captain Bluitt, firmly.

"I know," said the judge. "You said that before."

"Have you looked into the Second Book of Chronicles," said the captain, "to find out what King Uzziah did with his second-hand catapults?"

"I never thought of that," replied the judge.

"Sold them at auction, maybe," said Miss Bluitt.

"You don't think the Government would buy it to fight Indians with, do you?" asked the inventor.

CAPTAIN BLUITT

"I hardly know," answered the captain, "but I'm sure if I were going to fight Indians, I wouldn't care so very much to have that catapult with me."

"Well, it is too bad," said the judge, "but I haven't the least idea what to do with that thing. I hate to break up a machine that is covered all over with the triumphs of inventive genius. Suppose we go out on the lawn and have a look at it?"

Captain Bluiti and his sister and Judge McGann rose and walked to the place where the catapult stood. As they looked at the machine, Davis Cook, the plumber, drove up the street in his wagon. He stopped to glance at the catapult. Then he dismounted, hitched his horse and came to the fence. Presently he said:

"May I come in, captain?"

"Certainly," responded Captain Bluitt, in a cheery voice, "come right in."

When Davis Cook reached the group he looked with curiosity at the engine and asked:

"What is that, captain?"

"A catapult."

"What's it for?"

"It was intended to represent an engine of war used by the ancient Romans."

"How does it work?"

"You put a great stone or some other kind of missile in here," said Judge McGann, placing his hand on the receiver, "and it is hurled with tremendous force against the enemy."

"Mighty curious," said Davis Cook. "Where does the power come from?"

"Torsion," explained the judge. "Torsion from that rope, and Momentum from the fly-wheel; but, unfortunately, we had an accident on Saturday and the wheel is missing."

"I should like to see the thing work," said Davis Cook.

"Captain," said Judge McGann, with a touch of eagerness in his manner, "would you care if I should just give the thing one trial at throwing?"

"Well," said the captain, with a doubting look upon his face, "if you will be very careful you might try it just once—not more than once."

"Get me a brick-bat, Davis," said the judge. "Of course the real power of the machine can't be developed without the fly-wheel, but maybe I can give you an idea of the nature of the performance."

Placing the bit of brick in the receiver, the judge applied himself vigorously to twisting the rope. Having struggled with this task until he became much overheated, he put on the safety-brake, set the throwing-arm, and then turning to Captain Bluitt, he said:

"Which way would you like to have it go?"

"Out over the river of course."

"Very well, now watch it."

The judge released the brake, and as he did so the throwing-arm gave a fierce jump, swerved to the right, and hurled the brick-bat right through the garret-window in the gable of Captain Bluitt's house.

Judge McGann abandoned hope. He felt certain that the catapult had no future.

Captain Bluitt tried to suppress his anger. Turning to the judge he said:

"Now, judge, that's enough! We'll stop right there, I think, before the machine becomes actually murderous. If Titus's catapults had been at all like yours, Jerusalem, in my judgment, wouldn't have been taken until somewhere near about 1837. Get it out! Get it out of here, to-day, sure!"

"I will," said the judge, with much dejection, "and I'll split it into splinters."

"You want to get rid of the machine, do you?" asked Davis Cook.

"Yes!" exclaimed Captain Bluitt, vigorously.

Davis Cook walked around the catapult and looked narrowly at it, and patted it here and there, and seemed to be engaged in a mental struggle of some kind.

"Why don't you raffle it off?" he said at length.

"No!" said Captain Bluitt, "don't stop for that! Cart it away this morning."

"Do you want it, Davis?" inquired the judge.

"Well, not so very bad. I'm a peace man, but if I should go to war I'd rather not pull this thing after me. I have a notion, though, to take it off your hands if I can get it for a bargain."

"What will you do with it?" asked Miss Bluitt.

"Why, the thought occurred to me that I might give it for a birthday present to my wife."

"What would she do with it?" inquired the captain.

"Oh, I dunno; but she's got an uncommon talent for making things over. It might maybe be fixed up for an ironing-table, or as a frame for a hen-house."

"What will you give for it as it stands?" asked the judge.

Davis Cook again walked slowly around the catapult, and felt the rope, and examined the timbers; then he said:

"I won't give no money."

"What will you give?"

Davis Cook stopped, leaned against the safety-brake, put both hands in his trousers pockets, and after reflecting for a moment, said:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll trade you two setter pups for it and you to pay for carting it to my house."

Judge McGann became red and angry, but when he looked at the stern determination written upon Captain Bluitt's face, he exclaimed:

"What do you think Titus would have said to *that*, captain?"

"He would have said 'take it,'" declared the captain.

"I will," said the judge. "But mark me! That winds me up on classical machinery. I'll never spend another hour on a mechanical idea that is more than two years old."

The judge walked towards the gate, forgetting in his excitement and anger to say farewell to his friends. As his hands touched the latch he stopped, and turning to the group upon the lawn, he shouted:

"Davis! You may drown those pups! I don't want 'em!"

CHAPTER II

WALTER DRURY HAS A VISION OF AN ANGEL

ON Sunday morning Walter Drury came out from the house of Captain Bluitt, his uncle, and walked to the garden-gate. He had no thought whether he should turn to the right or to the left, when he emerged upon the street. If he had considered the matter at all, it would have seemed to him without importance that he should go in one direction or the other.

It was an idle day and he was in vagrant mood, strong with the joyousness of the vigorous life of youth, and careless but to have the stimulation of gentle exercise in the sweet air and the sunshine.

The broad river lay directly before him, ruffled by the breeze from the west, and beneath the river-bank across the street his uncle's boat swung to the pier. And if the river had no charm for him at this hour, the sand-beach, that stretched southward from the border of the town along the river, led to the shade and the grass and the seclusion of Graver's Point, a rocky promontory that thrust itself across the beach, close out to the verge of the stream. There were, besides, a pleasant walk up the river-shore, and another a mile or more out through a shady, hedge-lined lane to the grove near to the house of Dr. Quelch at Cedar Hill.

The smallest impulse supplied to his mind from the suggestion of another person would have sent him in any one of these various ways, and upon the next day he would have given no thought to the subject. But a

very small and apparently insignificant fact turned him away from the river and the beach and the quiet lane:

As he passed the garden-gate he thrust it from him to close it and one of the hinges became loose. Looking at it, he returned to the garden, walked around the house to the stable, and calling Rufus Potter, Captain Bluitt's hired man, he asked him to set the hinge in place. Then, merely to avoid going back again over the ground he had just now traversed, he opened the gate at the rear of the garden, and walked along the narrow thoroughfare to the corner of the street which ran from the river-bank up into the town.

Turning toward the village, he strolled along without any notion of his destination—or indeed of his destiny!

Faithful observance of Sunday as a day of rest from toil was the practice in Turley. The shops were closed; no vehicles rolled along the street, excepting now and then a physician passed by in his buggy, or a carriage bore its burden of worshippers to church, or contained men who sought pleasure away from town.

Drury observed the groups of people dressed in their best clothing, walking slowly to the houses of worship; he glanced at three or four idlers who sat upon the front porch of the hotel, smoking and talking, and looking as if they wished it were Monday; he noted that though the grass grew between the cobble-stones in the street-pavement the stones were clean; he stopped for a moment to watch two young dogs playing upon the grass of the square about the court-house; when he passed the drug-store he had an impulse, at once resisted, to enter and buy some soda-water, merely that he might appear to be doing something. He heard, without consciously hearing, the bells of the three large churches filling the air with clangour; and then, as he reached the head of the street, he inclined to turn about and go again to the river to discover if he might not find there something interesting for a spirit having just then no interest in anything, but given over to whim.

He stopped; and at that instant he really heard with

his mind the bell in the steeple of the Presbyterian church by which he was standing without realizing until then that he was near to a church. Gazing through the open door into the vestibule in the tower at the base of the steeple, he could see a white-haired negro with broad shoulders and strong arms pulling the rope that moved the bell away up in the belfry, and as he pulled bowing head and shoulders and body.

Drury watched him for a few moments, and was amused to notice in what manner the negro greeted the older people who entered the door, combining the bow of the bell-puller with the bow of courtesy, and how the smile changed suddenly to a frown as two or three boys ran through the east door, across the vestibule and out through the north door, tagging the sexton on the way.

The fancy took possession of Drury to enter the church and to look on. He resolved to remain but for a few moments and then to resume his saunter along the street. So he went on to the door that opened into the body of the church at the rear, near to the pulpit, and going in he took a seat in a position from which he could slip away, without attracting a great deal of attention.

The organist was engaged in playing the first voluntary as Drury took a place in the pew. The organ and the choir were directly across the room from him, by the side of the pulpit-platform. Drury merely glanced at them. Then he looked over the congregation and thought the people quite respectable in appearance and nice in their dress.

The preacher, Reverend Dr. Frobisher, began by giving out notices. Drury did not heed them. He simply thought the proceeding tiresome, and concluded from the sound of the doctor's voice that he must be a dull preacher, although he was a man of fine appearance.

Had Drury listened he would have noted that a missionary meeting would be held in the church on that very evening, and that an address would be made by a Hindu prince, Bunder Poot Singh, a convert to Christianity; and had the angel of destiny been near to Drury to whisper in his ear, the young man might have learned

that the distinguished foreigner would have no little influence upon his happiness in the time to come !

When the notices were ended there was a brief prayer and the choir sang a hymn. Walter took a hymn-book in his hand, but instead of opening it he began to count the ribs in the ceiling of the church ; and then he reflected that yellow pine darkened by age is really a very handsome wood.

The hymn ended and the members of the choir, at whom he had not looked, sat down. At that moment one of the women-singers attracted his attention. She had on a grey bonnet, and she turned her head towards the organ, so that the bright flowers upon the bonnet were made conspicuous. Walter looked at the flowers. The head turned again with the face toward the preacher, and Drury saw a countenance which sent thrills up and down his body. It looked to him like a very sweet face, but he was too far away to see it quite distinctly. He wished now that he had taken another seat closer to the singers.

But it was not the mere physical beauty of the face that affected him so strongly. He could not have explained the cause of his feelings, but as he looked and looked and looked, it seemed to him that he saw a creature who differed in some strange, wonderful way from any other human being he had ever seen. It actually appeared to him that she had a kind of relationship to him, or something at least in common with him.

He put his hand upon his cravat ; he pulled up his collar ; he felt his heart beat faster and his breathing become quicker. He wished he had worn a better suit of clothes.

Then he turned his head away and his mind revolted at the absurdity of his feelings ; but he had no longer any notion of leaving the church.

When the minister had read a chapter from the Scriptures he announced another hymn, and then the choir arose again to sing. Walter fastened his eyes upon the girl whom he had noticed, and observed and saw only her.

She sang the contralto part, her voice having lower range than the soprano. Drury possessed some small knowledge of music, and he clearly discerned her voice among the other voices. He thought it extremely pretty. During the singing of the second verse he heard none but her. The harmony enveloped her tones and flowed along with them; but for him the melody did not exist. He listened to that lower part, so rich and sweet, for the adornment of which the melody was made.

To many men the contralto voice, or the half-contralto voice, has peculiar attractiveness in singing. Is it because the deeper tone brings with it suggestion of passion and of fire? Or is it because the contralto, heard with the other voices, gives to the harmony its richest colouring? Of all the tones below the melody, this is the one that cannot be withheld, unless the picture is to be cold and grey and passionless.

There is in it, too, a gentle suggestion of sadness. Harken to it alone as the four parts go on together, and the contralto will seem always to have a strange tinge of melancholy, different from, and yet perhaps not unrelated to, the mysterious mournfulness of the minor chord.

Walter Drury heard it all through the hymn, and to him it seemed more beautiful than any human utterance he had ever listened to; and as if there were in it something of pang and sorrow, which were strangely foreign to the lovely girl with the bright, happy face at whom he looked.

He could see the face more plainly now that the members of the choir stood up and came forward a little way. The girl was indeed beautiful. He was oddly attracted by the movements of her mouth. Five or six other women were singing, but he thought, and the fact seemed strange to him, that their mouths while singing were ugly, while this one was indescribably charming.

The hymn ended and the singer retreated and sat down. Walter leaned back in his pew with a sigh, and wished there had been ten or fifteen more verses.

When prayer had been made, the deacons began to

take up the collection while the organist played upon his instrument. This operation completed, Drury was filled with delight to hear the player begin the prelude to a sacred song, and to see the girl take a piece of music in her hand and rise.

She would sing alone.

If Walter had admired her singing while she had the accompaniment of the voices, he listened with feelings of rapture to her as she interpreted, with the organ-tones below her, a plaintive, flowing melody joined with devotional words.

He looked at her and heard her like a man to whom the vision has come for the first time of that which is beautiful and holy, and existence seemed transformed for him. No longer he saw the walls of a common church surmounted by a mere wooden roof which echoed the voice of a dull speaker; the little building had become a temple, in which stood a priestess so sweet and pure and divinely fair that he could have worshipped her.

It vexed him in a way to perceive that the other people present appeared to regard that lovely music and the lovelier singer, if not quite with indifference, at most with little interest. The minister, sitting in his chair, turned over the pages of his sermon. Two of the deacons whispered across the backs of the pew. The chief soprano singer in the choir covered her mouth with her hand to conceal a yawn, and the negro sexton tiptoed along the side-aisle to summon a physician who sat among the congregation.

"What are these people made of, that such music does not impress them?" asked Walter of himself. Willingly would he have had it prolonged all through the remaining time of the service; but the last note sounded, and Dr. Frobisher arose and began his sermon.

The discourse might have considered Buddhism or Confucianism or any other ism that morning, and Drury would not have perceived that the preacher had departed from ordinary practice. His senses were concentrated in his optic nerve, and he was hardly conscious for a time of anything but the presence of the girl.

Then the organist slipped from the stool, and turning, placed a chair beside her and sat in it. He spoke to her and smiled. Drury was glad to perceive that she did not look at him or smile again. She shook her head gently and fixed her eyes upon the preacher.

Walter had a pang of jealousy as he looked at the young player. The man seemed familiar and impertinent. Why should he choose to sit just there? Then a wave of anguish swept across his mind as he thought this might be her husband. But surely she was too young and he was too much a youth for marriage to be likely. No, upon reflection he concluded that there was no relation between them other than that of player and singer. But why, then, should he come so close to her and manifest indifference to the other women-singers? Walter was sure from his manner that the organist admired her, and for that he could not be blamed; it was inevitable.

There was another pang as the thought came next of the great advantage the organist had in this matter over Walter Drury. The player knew her well, he met her frequently in the choir-rehearsals, he could visit her, no doubt, in her home, he could choose music for her, and advise with her, and find a hundred pretexts for speaking with her, while he, Walter Drury, did not know her, might never know her, did not even know her name.

The blood mounted to his face as he said to himself: "But I will know her name, and know her, and I will have her too, if that be possible."

He was in love with her, and with the kind of love that can hardly have patience to consider possibilities.

Then a revulsion came.

How absurd it was to have such feelings for a girl to whom he had never spoken a word; who might have no good mental qualities, no education, no social position, no qualities of any kind that would attract after close acquaintance. He remembered more than once having seen women who, at a little distance, appeared lovely, but from whom all charm vanished when they were met face to face. No doubt this girl was, after all, a very

ordinary sort of person. This was why the people in the pews seemed unmoved when she sang. Like all girls she must appear commonplace enough to a great many persons among whom she moved in the humdrum routine of life. At home this girl possibly was cross and tiresome and peevish, and perhaps had other disagreeable qualities, as had all the girls he had ever known.

Pshaw! He, Walter Drury, would walk out of the church in a few minutes just the same free man he was when he entered it, and ashamed that he should have permitted himself to be so much agitated by the singing of a pretty lass in a country choir. It might be well, in fact, to get up and go out now before the preacher ended the prosing and permitted the sleepers in the congregation to come back to consciousness.

Another look at her before he turned toward the door!

Ah! she was indeed comely to look upon. How modest and sensible her costume! That of itself indicated refinement of no small measure. How prettily she carried her head! The poise of it suggested firmness and confidence, without any touch of pride. Modesty was apparent in her whole bearing, and sweet gentleness. She had reverence too. There was whispering and smiling among the other singers, but her lovely face had gravity, and Walter thought she did not once fail to look straight at the minister. She was a good woman, he was sure; she was even trying to obtain some good from that dull sermon. Her hair seemed to be brown, and her eyes were not dark. The distance was too great to permit the facts to be clearly determined. Her nose, he thought, was small and straight; and her mouth! He had thought it charming while she sang; it seemed even more sweet and beautiful in repose.

As he gazed at her, again that strange feeling came to him that she belonged to him. He tried to discover the exact nature of an impression that his judgment told him could have no justification in reason; but the effort baffled him, while the impression became stronger.

The girl, for the first time since the sermon began,

turned her head, and for an instant swept the circumference of the church with her eyes. As her vision passed over him he observed that she had seen him; she looked again at the preacher, but at once returned her eyes to Walter and looked steadily upon him.

She saw that he perceived how he had attracted her attention, and again she gazed at the preacher, this time giving to her body a little motion toward the pulpit, as if she would emphasize the fact that she no longer would look at Walter.

He felt as if he were already acquainted with her.

A thrill of joy passed through him. They had met. It was the first time that his soul and hers had come into contact—yes, even if for the smallest fraction of a second.

Walter thought he saw her look furtively at him again, even while her face was turned from him, but he was not sure. Her attitude was one of close attention to the minister.

The sermon ended and there was a concluding hymn. The young singer rose and came forward with her companions, but apparently she did not look toward Walter. Then the ending prayer was made, and he saw her glance again about the church as she prepared to go. She did now look once more at him, but with a plain determination not to indicate that she had any feeling of curiosity or interest. In an instant she turned about and walked with one of her companions to the door of the gallery.

Walter resolved to go around to the door of the church through which she would be likely to pass, and to endeavour to see her at shorter distance.

Taking his hat, he went out from the pew, through the aisle, through the door to the street, and around the church with haste that was born of eagerness.

He stood upon the side-walk near to a tree, where two or three men and boys loitered, and saw a dozen or two persons emerge from the door, but the young girl was not among them. Waiting for a few moments, and discovering that nobody else was likely to come out that

way, he walked quickly toward the front of the church, and saw the woman for whom he was looking walking down the street, two hundred yards from him. She had gone from the choir to the main aisle, and had come through the great door at the front.

A young man walked with her and talked with her. Walter felt angry as he perceived it was the organist.

He noticed that her figure was fine, with the slenderness of young womanhood; that she carried herself gracefully and like a person in vigorous health. In her manner of walking there was a slight swaying motion which to him seemed lovely. He would not have admired it if any other woman had had it. Her attire appeared even more tasteful and beautiful than he had thought it to be.

The young man stood by the porch and watched the retreating figures until he was left alone, the congregation having completely dispersed. He was in perplexity. What should he do next?

CHAPTER III

SAUL TARSEL

THE next thing to be done by a young man to whom such an angelic vision had appeared would be, of course, to ascertain as speedily as might be the name and the domicile of the apparition. This information Walter Drury could obtain at once by returning to his uncle's house, for Captain Bluitt and his sister were members of Dr. Frobisher's congregation, and they knew all the nice people in Turley and all about them. But Walter shrank from the thought of speaking to his aunt about the matter. Somehow his feelings were too sacred to be in any measure exposed even to the suspicion of anybody who knew him.

As he walked a few steps to and fro upon the sidewalk in his hesitation, he glanced through the open door of the church-porch and saw the white-haired negro sexton coming to close the door. Drury at once determined to obtain from him, if possible, the information he wanted. He went into the vestibule and spoke to the negro.

"Good-mawnin, suh!" was the response of the sexton to Walter's greeting.

"Are you in a hurry to close the church?" asked Drury, slipping a silver coin into the hand of the negro.

"No, suh! not in so werry much ob a hurry! No, suh! time's not a-pushin' me; on'y I mus' shet de chu'ch befo' dinnah."

"I am a stranger here," said Walter, entering the church and taking a seat in one of the pews, where the sexton followed him and stood listening to him, "and I am much interested in the church."

"Yes, suh! hit's a mighty fine chu'ch, dat's a fac'. Mighty fine."

"You have charge of it? You're the sexton?"

"Yes, suh!"

"What's your name?"

"Saul, suh! Saul Tarsel."

"It sounds like Saul of Tarsus," said Walter. "You're not related to him?" he asked with a glimmer of facetiousness.

"No, suh! No, dough it soun's like dat. Hit's dish yer way. My ole marster, en de Souf, he fon' o' de name o' Saul, an' he 'sisted on my mammy callin' me Saul. But you know dere's free Sauls in de Bible; dere's Saul de fus king, befo' whom David played on de jew's harp; an' den dere's Saulomon de wises' man, and den Saul o' Tarsus. Well, den, to 'stinguish me from de cdder Sauls dey gwine to call me Saul o' Tarsus. Den dese yer ignorant niggers who doan 'tend no chu'ch, and goes soun' asleep when dey does 'tend, an' can't read de good Book nohow, dey got to callin' me Tarsel; an' dat's good 'nough name fo' me who nebber had no las' name when I was a boy."

"You were a slave once, then?"

"Yes, suh! Bo'n dat way; down in Wirginny. But my ol' marster set me free by his will, and when he die I ain' no man's slave no longer. I jes' walk off the plantation a free man. But my wife Phœbe, she belong to Cunnel Johnson, and so does our little gal, Liddy, an' when de cunnel die, dem heirs jes sol' de mammy an' de chile to Jedge Bickerstaff, down in Gawgia; an' dere dey is now."

Walter was amused by the old man's talk. As the sexton stood in the aisle, leaning on the pronged pole with which he closed the windows and turned off and on the gas, he looked, with his white, bushy crown of wool, like a brown Neptune holding his trident.

"You have a good place here as sexton?" asked Drury.

"Well, Ise makin' no complaint, but the fac' is dere's a heap o' trouble fo' a brack man tryin' to run a congregation like dis, 'specially in de winter time. Why, de fus thing you know ob a Sunnay mawnin', Miss Blackstone she come to me an' say, 'Saul, you wan' to freeze me to def? Dish yer chu'ch jes like a ba'n; ' an' den she 'sist dat I go down an' put de draf on de furnace.

"I ain' mo'n done it, when Miss F'obisher come a-flyin' at me, all wukked up an' eggsited, an' say, 'Saul, you inten'in to roas' us in dish yer bake-oven? Why doan you 'bserve de femometer an' keep de temptershure down so's we kin breave widout stiflin'?"

"Mrs. Frobisher is the minister's wife?"

"Yes, suh! de wife o' de pasture o' de chu'ch, an' she jes es fiery es a snappin' cracker. Well, suh, de werry nex' momen' Miss Wiggin come outen de westendbule, wid her shawl tight aroun' her, and say, 'Saul, ef you opens up dem win'ows an' put me in de draf, I gets de plumbago sure! Close dat win'ow, or I 'bleeged to go right home.' De wuds hardly outen her mouf befo' up come Miss Brown an' splain to me dat de sash mus' be lifed, kase ef you doan let in de oxengin, hit's no use a-tryin' to keep de congregation from sleepin', ef dey was an angel preachin'.

"Now, marster, what's a brack man gwine to do wid dem pussons? I dunno. Can't please 'em all, dat's werry sartin. Can't have de chu'ch bofe hot an' col', an de win'ows bofe open an' shet at one an' de same time."

"It's a difficult problem," said Walter.

"Dat's what I sez; and dere's Mars. Bulger, 'cross de street. He's a Mefodis; and he hail me yesserday an' say, 'Tarsel, wheffo' you keep a-janglin' dat blame bell so long? Short rings is good as long rings; cut 'em short.' Dat's what Mars. Bulger say, but it ain' fo' days sence Docker F'obisher instruc' me dat de bell mus' be rung full ten minutes ebery time.

"An' den dem Sunnay School boys! Declar' to gracious ef dey doan beat de ten comma'ments wid

dere foolishness! 'Pears to me dat Sunnay School boys is wuss, somehow, dan odder kin's o' boys. I dunno; but I nebber see no boy dat 'd b have right in chu'ch. Dere's dem boys o' Miss Pottah's.

"Miss Pottah she bring de hull o' her eight chilluns to chu'ch ebery Sunnay, an' de way dey bodder de folks in de 'jinin' pews is suprisin'. De oldah boys dey sits dere an' jes wiggle an' wiggle, endurin' de sermon, twel I declar' I doan see how Miss Pottah eber keeps dem in panties. An' sometimes dey gits to fightin' one anudder in de mos' scand'lus manner, twel Doctah F'obisher has to stop de discause an' look at 'em savage ober his specs. Dey nearly worry de life outen Majah Gridley in de nex' pew in front. Majah Gridley he a kin'-hearted man, who doan wan' to make no row wid a pusson in chu'ch; but las' Sunnay Miss Pottah she bring de baby to chu'ch, and dat chile so res'less she neber still half-a-minut. Fus yer an' den dere, a-movin' an a-talkin' an' a-goin' on all de time! Dat baby of Miss Pottah's put me in min' o' one o' dem 'petual motion machines Jedge McGann sez he gwine to make. An' after chu'ch was out, Majah Gridley he come to me an' he sez, 'Tarsel, sumpin sholy got to be done wid dem Pottah chilluns, mos' sholy sumpin! I doan min', sez he, 'dare wrigglin' an' dare res'lessness, an' I kin stan' it, hard as it is, when dem boys rubs dare noses wid de sleeves o' dare jackets; but, Tarsel,' sez he, 'when dat baby reach ober fr n de mudder's lap an' pat de bal' place on my head twice endurin' de sermon, de en' is reached! Tarsel,' sez he, 'I draws de line at dat!' Yes, suh! dem's de werry wuds Majah Gridley sez to me. 'I draws de line at de Pottah baby pattin' my bal' head endurin' de sermon. Soonah dan stan' dat any longer I jines de 'Piscopals,' sez he."

"I must go," said Walter, laughing and rising from his seat, as if he cared to hear no more. But as he stood by the pew door, he added:

"Yes, you have a very nice church here, very nice. Good music, too; good organ and good choir. By the way, who is the organist, Tarsel?"

"Dat's Dokker F'obisher's son, suh, Mars. Lucky

F'obisher, an' a mighty fine young gemman he is, suh, too."

"I noticed a young lady in the choir, a young lady with a grey bonnet who sang second. Who was she?"

"You doan' mean de leddy wid de red ribbon on her dress, dat sat nex' to de las' on de front row, an' sang all by herself?"

"Yes, that's the one. I thought she was rather a fair singer."

"Dat ain' sayin' mo' 'n half 'nough, marster! Singin'? Why, marster, dat young leddy beats de werry birds a singin', an' dey ain' nobody beats her. Singin'? Well, I reckon she *kin* sing. An' dat ain' de bes' o' it needer. She's jes one o' dem angels, she is; kin' an' sweet an' good! I really 'bleeged to declar' dat she's almos' too good fo' dish yer ol' yearth."

"Let me see, what did you say her name was?"

"Name? She name Missy Dorry Hamilton. Her fader he is Mars. John Hamilton, de cashyear down yer at de bank. Mons'ous nice gemman! He's got eight hun'ed dollars o' mine dat Ise a savin' to buy my wife an' daughter."

Walter had gained all the information he wanted. He preferred to change the subject of conversation.

"So you are saving money for the purchase of your wife and child, are you?"

"Yes, suh!"

"You've got eight hundred dollars. How much more do you want?"

"De jedge say he mus' hab fifteen hun'ed fo' de mammy and de gal. De mammy she a gittin' ol' an' ain' wuff much to him, but she's wuff a heap to me, suh!"

"So you have seven hundred dollars yet to get?"

"Yes, suh! It tek me eight years to get togedder dat eight hun'ed dat Mars. Hamilton hol' fo' me, an' it seem lek a long time to wait fo' de res'—a long time, marster, werry, werry long. De pasture he preach de odder day 'bout Rachel a weepin' fo' her chilluns. I doan know much 'bout dat Rachel; ef she los' dem

chilluns she 'bleedged to weep, I s'pose, but, marster, Ise a weepin' an' a weepin', offen an' offen, fo' bofe de wife an' de chile—my wife an' r'y chile."

"It does seem hard, surely," said Drury.

"Yes, suh, hard! dat's de wud. An' sometimes I wunner, when de pasture's a prayin' all 'round de yearth fo' dem heathens, an' fo' dis an' fo' dat, he doan frow in jes a little prayin' fo' de ol' man right yer, who sets home wid de heart a bleedin' an' de tears a flowin' fo' his own flesh an' blood. Dat's what I wunner.

"I ain' got no grudge agin de po' heathens. Dey has troubles o' dere own an' miseries 'nough to bodder dem, an' when dey tek up de c'lections fur 'em Ise willin' to frow in my penny wid de res'; but hit 'pears to me dat when de chu'ch done a c'lectin' fur de heathen an' got shet o' dem, 'twouldn't be ongracious to han' aroun' de plate to h'lp dish yer Chris'n brack man to get his arms aroun' his wife an' liddle gal."

Walter handed him another silver piece and said:

"I think so too, Saul. And now I must say good-morning," and Walter went into the street.

As he walked down the street towards his uncle's house, the young man found that a marvellous change had come into his life. When he left the house he had been self-absorbed and self-contented. He had had what he would have considered, if he had thought of it at all, the happiness of indifference to the lives of other people than those with whom he had ties of blood, and with whom also his relations were firmly established and clearly understood upon both sides. The current of his life and of his thoughts and purposes ran in the familiar and natural channels of selfishness. How he should make his way in this tough old world, how he should cultivate his understanding, how he should obtain satisfaction in the pursuit of pleasure, how he should climb higher and higher, and how he should become rich—these were the matters that seemed to him important, and it was worth while that he should spend upon the effort to obtain them all the physical and intellectual force that he possessed.

Marriage he had thought of as one of the experiences likely to come to him in the future—after a while. When he had won all the other victories and placed his feet firmly upon the stones of fame and fortune, then he should have time enough to give attention to matters of a purely sentimental nature—then, he had sometimes thought, he would begin to look about him for a wife, whom he would choose and pick from among the many nice girls he knew and should know, with the same unimpassioned deliberateness of action as if he were to choose a partner in business.

Not that he consciously ignored the differences that might belong to the choice of a wife in comparison with the choice of other desirable objects; for he knew from hearsay, at least, that loveless marriages have an element of horror. But if he had tried to examine the subject closely, he would probably have imagined that when he had got everything ready, and could glance at the calendar and say, "the day has come!" he would be able to look about him tranquilly, and perhaps in a severely critical spirit, and having discovered the very girl of girls for him, he would open the draught-valve of his affections, and just permit them, under properly prepared conditions, to come to a glow.

But, in truth, he had not closely followed with his mind the possible processes of preparing to love somebody. He had simply let the matter lie almost dormant, recognizing some considerable and decidedly pleasing force in sex-attraction, but having no notion whatever of the tremendous meaning involved in that familiar phrase, "falling in love,"—a phrase which to the inexperienced youth appears to be not without humorous aspects and suggestions.

If Drury had been asked at ten o'clock on that Sunday morning if he wished to fall in love, he might have said, "Yes, some day or other; when the necessary preliminaries of life have all been nicely arranged, and I have had an opportunity to examine with a clear mind all the concomitant circumstances; but not now; very decidedly not now!"

Now, however, happened to be the time. He could have no doubt about the nature of the experience that had come to him, although never before had he encountered anything even akin to it. He was conscious of a strange kind of exaltation, so that his step was lighter and his spirit full of exhilaration while, at the very same time, he was weighed down by fear which bordered upon hopelessness.

Yes, the sun seemed to shine with more intense brightness; the atmosphere was sweeter and purer; the trees were more beautiful with their leaves fluttering in the wind; the old town appeared to have less kinship with the prosy and the commonplace; the idlers upon the hotel porch were not quite so much objects of indifference to him as they had been when he came up the street. There was a lustrous blueness to the sky and a folded, shadowy, rolling loveliness in the clouds that he had not noticed before. He was lifted up so that existence had strange joyousness, and his powers seemed so much enlarged, so highly charged with intensity and enthusiasm, that he really felt as if he could accomplish anything.

Anything, provided he could be sure that his life would no longer be solitary.

For, running with this wonderful music which had come into his soul, was a deep undertone of sadness. Yes, he was ready to confess that the life of that other being had brought rapture to his soul, but what if no responsive note were struck in her spirit? Looked at in the light of cold common-sense, surely it was more than absurd for him to expect that, because the vision of a lovely girl standing afar from him had thrilled him to the centre of his being, she should have had a corresponding sensation. She had scarcely looked at him. He had heard often of spiritual phenomena which seemed to show that soul may touch soul without words and without regard for distances; but incidents of this kind often have a very unsubstantial basis. One cannot quite prove the truth of assertion in such a case. There may be hallucination, or mere coincidence, or sheer fabrication.

He had heard oftener of men infatuated with women who scorned and rejected them, and the evidence in these instances was of indisputable soundness. To love a woman and not to be loved in return—that, he thought, is one of the commonest experiences; and that the mis-spent love is often sincere and genuine was proved by the fact that the victim sometimes prefers and seeks death rather than to endure the suffering imposed upon him.

"Here I am," said Walter to himself, "filled with unspeakable joy, and with my life, and all life, presented to me in a new and wondrously beautiful aspect, because I saw a pretty girl across a church and heard her sing! That girl has gone home, as she has done hundreds of times before, to eat her dinner, to chat with her family, to seek her own pleasures, without even remembering that she happened to see a strange young man loitering in the opposite pew and looking at her. I am a fool to permit myself to be so much affected by so ordinary an occurrence."

But the argument that ended with clear proof of foolishness brought him to no conclusion that he would abandon the whole matter. When the reasoning was ended, and the requirements of good sense had been considered, and the folly of yielding to such feelings had been demonstrated, wave after wave of emotion seemed to sweep over his soul as he perceived that he was no longer master of himself. Here was something that he could not surrender if he would; and he had no desire to give it up. To give it up! He was perfectly certain that he would rather perish than let this passion go. This that had come to him so strangely, so unexpectedly—this he felt had penetrated to the inmost recesses of his life, so that it had indeed become part of the life itself, and to try to wrench it from him would be to make what should be left a wreck and a horror.

All the things that he had cared for so much, his promotion, money, fame, his pleasures—all these within two hours had shrivelled into such insignificance that they actually appeared contemptible. And as his mind

considered the new force that had infused his spirit, he thought within himself that he would joyfully surrender these things, everything that he had or could get, just to have that other soul joined with his. "Yes," he said, "no task can be too severe, no burden too heavy, no sacrifice too great, but that I will joyfully do, and bear, and endure if I can have the prize for mine!"

As he thus thought, in a half-delirium of ecstasy and pain, his eyes chanced to rest upon a name upon the door of the house by which he passed. He saw the name without, for an instant, recognizing it, but as he looked his mind seemed to clear itself by an effort, and he became conscious that the name was Hamilton.

His heart beat faster, and he felt more buoyant than ever. "It is her house. She lives there!" he said.

He examined the building with a quick glance. It was a plain but handsome brick house, the walls coming to the side-walk, the outside shutters wide open, but the interior screened by pretty white curtains.

Walter walked onward, but he turned to look at the house. He did not like to stop; so he passed on to the next street, turned down it, walked around the block, and, going to the other side of the main street, reduced his gait so as to give him the minimum of motion, and observed the Hamilton mansion with eager attention.

"What wouldn't I give to be in that house now?" he said. "A simple matter, too! Thousands of people have gone there. Young Frobisher has entered there often," and there was a pang in that thought. "You ring the door-bell," said Walter, "the servant comes; you enter the hall and pass into the parlour, and then SHE comes!" He felt as if he were afire. "And she is in there now, and people talk with her actually as if *that* were nothing, and with them this day will roll by just as yesterday rolled by with me, and those dull, stupid people with her will have no idea that here is a human being nearly wild with the fury of a passion that consumes him. How odd it is," he thought, "that they

should be so cold and so much engaged with common things—eating mere dinner, for example—while I am almost insane with love for their daughter!”

Drury thought he saw her at the window, and he caught his breath. No; it was a servant. She saw him looking. He must hurry on.

And as he quickened his step he said: “I will become acquainted with her; I will go into that house; I will win her if man can win her, and the time will come when we shall walk these streets together, and enter that house together as man and wife.”

Then he felt more joyful. The matter seemed to him to be settled, even if reason did point the other way.

He reached his uncle's gate, and swinging it open, he went upon the porch and knocked upon the door. Waiting, he turned to look at the river which lay beyond the garden and the road, glorious in the sunshine of the summer noontide. Like all nature about him, the shining stream seemed to the young man to have loveliness never before discerned.

The door opened, and a negress invited him to enter. A negress, small, thin, her face yellow-brown, but more yellow than brown, in colour, with high cheek-bones, a straight nose, lips strangely thin and firm-set for one of her race, and with jet-black eyes, that seemed even to Walter, as he looked at her, to have in them fire and fierceness that he had never perceived before, excepting in the eyes of an untamed animal.

“Good-mawnin', Mister Walter,” said Becky Slifer, as she closed the door when he had come in.

This woman had been for six months a servant in Captain Bluitt's house. He did not know her history. She was a runaway slave. She had seen her father and mother resold into slavery to different masters and separated from their children, and the children parted from each other permanently and hopelessly; and into her soul had come a bitter, deadly hatred of the system from which these results were produced. She resolved that, for herself, she would have freedom, and she fled

from the home of her mistress and sought refuge in Turley in the service of Captain Bluitt. Before she ran away her mistress had urged her to marry, and she had refused :

"No, I doan marry. I doan bring no slaves into the world. No slave wid my blood in him! Never!"

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CHAPTER IV

IN A SAILOR'S SNUG HARBOUR

WHEN Walter reached Captain Bluitt's house it was almost the hour for the Sunday dinner.

Captain Elijah Bluitt, the brother of Walter Drury's mother, had been a sea-faring man during the larger part of his life. His father had commanded a merchant-ship, and his desire was that the boy should follow the same profession ; and so at an early age Elijah had been removed from school and placed upon a ship commanded by a friend of his father. Here he learned by experience, somewhat softened by the friendship of the captain, but still having elements of roughness and hardship, the business of a sailor.

In his youth he had some liking for the life, but as he grew older it became so distasteful to him that he would have quitted it, but that he had had no training in any other industry, and that the whole of the small property left by his father at death was in ships. Moreover, Bluitt found that he had no greater liking for commercial life than he had for roving the seas. He would have preferred science or literature, or one of the so-called learned professions, but he had not enough ordinary education to permit him to hope for success along these lines, and he felt that he was too old to begin tasks which he should have been required to perform in childhood.

He did, however, read much in the leisure hours he

found during his voyages, and while his stock of information enlarged, his hunger for it became more intense.

Three or four years before he quit the sea, his ship lay in the Bay of Naples. It was his first visit to that part of the world, and a miscarriage of freights upon the railway compelled him to remain at Naples for several weeks. He used the opportunity to visit Rome, of which at that time he knew almost nothing.

Finding a skilful guide who spoke English, Captain Bluitt spent nearly two weeks in exploring the city, and with the experiences of each succeeding day his wonder and his enthusiasm increased. He regarded it as much the most interesting place that he had ever seen, and the Romans as the greatest of all peoples, ancient or modern.

He made up his mind to inform himself respecting the Romans, their history and their great city; and so he bought every book in the English language that he could find that would help him, and returned to his vessel with his baggage loaded with literature, and his eagerness for historical study so much quickened that the duties of his position as commander of a ship seemed almost insufferably commonplace and tiresome.

This fondness for Rome and Romans had not been diminished by increasing years. He carried it with him upon the return voyage, and even through the exciting period when good fortune permitted him to make heavy gains from the movements which followed the discovery of the California gold deposits.

Captain Bluitt's ship was in the Pacific at that time. He had just completed a voyage to Valparaiso when the news came of the rush across the isthmus to California. He sailed to Panama, carrying a cargo of provisions. He crammed his ship with eager gold-hunters, who paid heavy charges for transportation, and when he reached San Francisco he sold his cargo for prices that seemed to him to make him rich.

In this kind of business he continued for three years, and then, doubling the Horn, he sailed home with a comfortable fortune, resolved to give up life upon the

It is to those who have that new riches come ; and Captain Bluitt had no sooner sold his vessel and gathered h's gains together, than an uncle died and bequeathed another small fortune to him and to his sister Puella Bluitt, then a teacher in a public school, who joined him in making a home at Turley, and who, at the time when this tale begins, was in her thirty-fifth year.

Captain Bluitt was a man of middle height, inclined to stoutness, with a ruddy countenance, bright grey eyes, and with white streaks in hair which persisted in standing straight up above his forehead, like a plume in a soldier's helmet.

Walter was almost a stranger in his uncle's house ; and so he had looked about him with curious interest when he first entered it on Saturday evening ; and he still found objects to attract his attention as he awaited in the library with his uncle and aunt the call for dinner.

Upon the mantel over the fire-place he had observed three queer porcelain images, which looked as though they might be idols from India. One stood on either end of the shelf, and the other, of hideous visage and distorted shape, remained precisely in the middle.

After some general talk, Walter, standing by the fire-place, facing Captain and Miss Bluitt, who sat in rocking-chairs, one to the right, the other to the left, extended his arm to the image in the middle, and touching it with his finger as he half turned about, said :

"What is that, uncle?"

Captain Bluitt smiled, and, as if he were only half in earnest, answered :

"That is a Lar, my son—a Lar."

It was Walter's turn to smile.

"A Lar! Why, what on earth put you up to getting a Lar?"

"It is an old Roman idea, you know. I had a kind of notion we might as well have one. The Lar represented the dead ancestors, and the Penates were a sort of household deities. These two at the end of the mantel come somewhere near to my idea of Penates."

Walter looked at them and his smile broadened.

"Well, well! Lares and Penates! They are queer things to find in Turley! And this Lar represents our ancestors, does he?"

"I'd be sorry to think any of mine ever looked like that," remarked Miss Puella.

"Oh! I suppose nobody ever expected to make absolutely exact likenesses," said the captain. "The idea, I think, is that one Lar, just one, stands for the whole lot of your folks that have preceded you."

"This is a rough little fellow to represent so many good people," said Walter, lifting the image and examining it.

"I picked up him and the other two in India. They were given to me by a friend of mine in Calcutta; a fine fellow, too, Thompson was; and he had a sad fate: he was murdered by his servant. I brought them home, and when I unpacked them the fancy struck me that one would do for a Lar and the other two for Penates. Don't you think, Walter, that those two at the ends are about as near right for Penates as we could reasonably expect?"

"I don't know that I am much of a judge of such things, but if Penates usually were homely to the point of exciting consternation, I should say that they will answer."

"Perfectly hideous! Walter, aren't they?" asked Miss Bluitt.

"You know," said the captain, "the old Roman idea was to place the Lar on the hearth and to put the Penates in the pantry; but your aunt didn't like to have them there, and really I suppose it does not make much difference anyway, does it?"

"I should think not," answered Walter.

"The Roman father of the family," continued Captain Bluitt, "used to pray every morning to the Lar, just to start the day right."

"I am awfully afraid your uncle will get to doing that," said Miss Bluitt. "Think of idolatry in this house, Walter!"

"No!" said the captain, "I don't think I shall go that

far. It would be almost too irregular for Presbyterians. If the Lar has any good in him for us he will have to give it to us spontaneously."

"Dr. Frobisher never liked the images," said Miss Bluitt.

"No," remarked the captain, "he is suspicious. I told him one day what they were and he seemed very sad. The next Sunday I was at church he gave out the hymn, 'From Greenland's icy mountains,' and said: 'The choir will please begin to sing at the second verse.' Then he turned and looked straight at our pew while he repeated mournfully the words: 'The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone.' But it is all right; I didn't mind it; the doctor's intentions are good."

"I fully explained to him," said Miss Bluitt, "that brother never thought of such a thing."

"Not exactly, 'never thought of it,' Puella, for I have had the notion once or twice to try it, but I never will."

"It would be outrageous, brother! and Dr. Frobisher insisted anyhow that it was setting a bad example to have such heathenish things sitting about."

"I see," remarked Walter, pointing to a table by the wall, "that you also have the wolf and Romulus and Remus."

"Yes," replied Captain Bluitt, turning toward the table, "I got that in Rome. It's pure silver, and cost me a summum bonum, a good sum, as those old fellows used to say. They have them all over Rome, you know. Queer idea, wasn't it, Walter, to start a young family on wolf's milk?"

"It was perfectly scandalous for their own mother to desert them!" exclaimed Miss Bluitt.

"By the way, Walter," said the captain, picking up the image, "which do you think is Romulus and which Remus?"

"I can't imagine," answered Walter, looking at the group critically.

"I've always had the notion this was Romulus," said Captain Bluitt, touching one of the figures.

"Why?"

"Well, both their noses are flattened, but this one has what looks to me more like a Roman nose."

Captain Bluitt might have been disposed to continue discussion of the famous twins, but just then the dinner-bell rang, and Walter, who longed for a chance to ask about Miss Hamilton, was not sorry to permit Romulus and Remus to repose once more upon the table.

The captain, however, still had his mind upon Roman things, and when dinner had begun he said:

"You care a little about Rome, I suppose, my boy?"

"Oh yes! of course, a little."

"Ah! there was a great people! Never was such a people, in my judgment!" continued Captain Bluitt.

"What wouldn't I give to have lived among them!"

"It must have been horrid," said Miss Bluitt. "I am so glad we didn't."

"Think what it must have been, Walter, to know Scipio Africanus and the Mother of the Gracchi! And what a rascal that man Tarquin was! He's the man, isn't he, to whom some old writer applied the phrase '*lusus naturæ*'—naturally loose?"

"I hardly think so," said Walter, laughing.

"And there is Numa Pompilius! What a man he must have been! I am going to see him in heaven, sure."

"Maybe he won't be there," said Walter.

"Maybe you won't be there, brother," added Miss Bluitt, "if you really do begin to care too much for idols."

"I will see him if we are both there," said the captain sternly. "Wasn't it smart, Walter, for that man in the far-off time to work out the problem of the seasons? No instruments, no mathematics worth speaking of—nothing to help him! I've often wondered how he managed it. I would like to give him some points in navigation."

"Not in heaven, brother!"

"You don't know. Just as likely as not navigation is used there. Nobody can tell."

"I'm afraid," responded Miss Bluitt, "there may be

queer things and queer people in the other world. Suppose, for example, Goliath should be there!"

"I hardly think I would let that worry me, if I were you, Puella," said the captain.

Walter, in the hope of diverting the conversation, remarked that he should be compelled to leave Turley upon that very evening.

"I am sorry, my son," said the captain. "I am very sorry. And how are you getting along in that business of commercial travelling? Not much in it?"

"I have failed completely," said Walter, sadly. "I am positively sure of one thing—that I was never born for a salesman. There is a complete trade-paralysis, apparently, as soon as I reach a given market. I am disgusted with the business."

"Walter," remarked the captain, "I knew you would fail. You were not built for that kind of thing. You are naturally a writer and a speaker. I heard you speak once, and I saw right off that you have the gift. It is actually wicked to put a man like you at hawking notions around the land; positively wicked!"

"But I must earn my living, somehow!"

"Certainly! but you can't do it at work you're not fit for. That's what's the matter with nearly all the men that fail. Half the fools are no fools, but just misfits. The world's full of globular men who have cubical jobs."

"I'm afraid so," said Walter, smiling.

"Find your place, my son, to start with. Have you a gift for fishing? Fish! and let gunning alone. Is your call for submarine diving? Very well! Don't go into the flying machine business! I tell you, Walter, much of the misery in the world is caused by men getting into wrong places. I ought never to have been a sailor. My real call was to get an education and to be a college professor!"

"I have some other call than the one I am answering now," said Walter, "but it is not perfectly clear."

"If you yearn for botany," said Captain Bluitt with emphasis, "keep away from astronomy. Don't put a boy at doctoring if nature intended him to play the French

horn! Walter, the world is out of joint, somehow. If things were as they ought to be, there would be a right place for every man, and a good husband for every woman."

Walter began to hope that his opportunity was near at hand to speak of the matter that most interested him.

"Yes, sir!" continued Captain Bluit, striking the table with the butt of the handle of his knife. "There is a good husband for every woman and a good wife for every man—somewhere; and if they meet, they know each other instantly."

"I don't believe it," said Miss Bluit.

"You don't believe it, because some couples that are made for each other never meet. That's what I say! The world has been disjointed; but that doesn't change the fact."

"The tramps seem to have missed their right places," observed Walter.

"Very well!" said the captain, sharply, "and how do you account for tramps?"

"I don't try to account for them."

"But I do!" exclaimed Captain Bluit. "It is this way:—A man whose father had a wrong job marries a girl whose father had a wrong job, and whose mother was the daughter of another misfit. Their son is a tramp sure."

"A hereditary misfit!" suggested Walter.

"Just so! the man has almost every particle of original force so twisted and half-paralyzed that he can't tell what he is good for."

"Then you don't blame a tramp for being a tramp?" asked Walter.

"Not severely," responded the captain, with a benevolent look upon his face. "The man is born that way. Hereditary influence overpowers him. He can't help himself. Do you know what I would do if I were very rich?"

"What?" asked Puella and Walter in one breath.

"I would start a factory and call it the Misfit Mill. I would make things that nobody wants, and I would fill

the mill with operatives, not one of whom knows how to do anything—just spend the money on them. How do you think that would work, Walter?"

"You would never have done for a professor of political economy, uncle, that's certain."

"Maybe not," responded the captain. "I wouldn't try to run the mill for science, but for philanthropy. I should like to find out what each man would do if he could do as he pleased. I have an idea that every human creature, way down in his soul, unknown to himself, perhaps, has a capacity for some kind of work. What he wants is a chance. In my Misfit Mill he should have a chance. If he had a turn for mechanics, let him start some mechanical job. If poetry were his line, I'd give him pen and ink and paper and set him to turning out poetry. I'd say to each one, 'Now, my man, you never had a chance to follow your natural inclination, and I'm going to give you one. Tell me what thing you'd rather do than to do any other thing, and I'll give you living wages for doing it.'"

"Eating and sleeping would be found the most agreeable occupation for most of them, I guess," said Puella Bluitt.

"No, I don't believe it," answered her brother; "but maybe I'm wrong; perhaps a long succession of inter-marriages by misfits can root out a man's original love for his own work. I'd like to try the experiment, anyway."

"You weren't at church this morning, Walter?" asked Miss Puella, somewhat weary of talk upon a subject about which she had heard much upon previous occasions.

"Yes, I was at your church," answered Walter.

"Why, I didn't see you there."

"I sat over near the door by the pulpit."

"What did you think of Dr. Frobisher's preaching?"

"Very good! Very good indeed!" Walter hoped that his aunt would not question him more closely along that line.

"And our music?" asked his aunt.

Walter's interest at once became strong.

"Ah, that was fine, very fine! Your organist is—?"

"Dr. Frobisher's son—Lochinvar. Stupid name, isn't it?"

"I liked the singing even better than the playing, particularly the singing of that young contralto."

Walter endeavoured to say this in a manner expressive of no great interest; but his uncle's attention was arrested by something in the tone of the young man's voice, and he was not slow in his perceptions. He looked sharply at Walter. Puella answered without suspicion.

"Oh! that is Dorothea Hamilton. Isn't she lovely? A charming voice and manner, too! Did you particularly notice her, Walter?"

Walter felt the flush creep over his face, and there was an impulse to clear his throat, before he answered:

"Yes; I thought her voice fine; but I was not quite near enough to see her face with perfect distinctness."

"She is just sweet," said his aunt. "That's the only word for her. I shouldn't like anything better than for you to get a wife like that."

Walter laughed as if to appear to treat the suggestion lightly. "Oh! that kind of thing is far in the future for me," he said.

"And don't you hurry it, my boy, either," remarked the captain. "When you meet the right one you will know her, and it's not safe to try to force things until you do meet and know her."

"There is no danger that I shall do that," said Walter.

"Because, my son," continued Captain Bluit, "while a misfit occupation is bad, a misfit marriage is as near to clear misery as you can get this side of the grave. And then," said the captain, taking up the subject with the tone of a man who had reached impregnable conclusions, and as if Walter were in pressing need of wise counsel upon this particular subject, "and then I'll tell you, look out for posterity when you take up this marrying business. You don't marry the girl

only; you marry papa and mamma, and the cousins and the aunts, and all the miscellaneous relations, sideways, forwards, backwards and cat-a-corner. You also take on grandpa and grandma, and great-grandpa and great-grandma, eight or ten of these maybe."

"You'll scare the boy, brother," said Puella.

"No; it never hurts a sensible man to look the facts squarely in the face. The girl is lovely, is she? Very well; start with that, if you please. But grandpa was a little bit shady, one way or another; or great-grandpa, one or the other of them, wouldn't have registered quite A1 as they say; or somewhere else along the line there was an ancestor whose reputation wasn't clear white. Now, the poor girl can't help it, but, my son, you may put it down in your memorandum-book as a certainty, that in one of her boys or girls (and yours), the crooked streak that the forefather had will come out, and maybe in all of them. It's like a cast in the eye. Now, my son, don't you marry a hereditary squint,—physical or moral."

"I am much obliged to you for the suggestion," said Walter.

Captain Bluitt became contemplative. Toying with his glass he said:

"I've seen two brothers, both fine fellows, marry. One picked out a high-bred girl, even better than himself. The other married a pretty girl who had no bringing up and no family worth noticing. Their children grew up and didn't know one another. Their grandchildren were as far apart as the Tropic of Cancer is from the Arctic Circle. That's the way the thing goes. A man can't fly too high when he is out for a life-partner."

"Brother, you don't mean to give Walter the idea that the Hamiltons are not nice people?"

"Oh, no! certainly not. I didn't have them in my mind at all. I was speaking generally. No, no! I don't warm to John Hamilton very much myself, but I know of nothing against him, and his wife is one of the saints. You know, Walter, I don't care much for the old-time

saints that some church people pay attention to. Maybe they were saints and maybe they weren't. The chances I think are about even ; but I'm very fond of the home-saints. I know about them. They are tolerably scarce around Turley—dreadfully scarce, we might say, perhaps—but John Hamilton's wife is one of them. And John is all right too, I guess, but he has a long way to go, I should say, before he can edge in among the saints."

"His daughter is one, I think," added Puella.

"So do I," said the captain, heartily. "Yes ; she is hard to beat, that's a fact. But," continued Bluitt, taking up the talk about matrimony, "there's one thing more I might say to a young man who is looking for a wife. Quite likely it isn't necessary in your case, Walter, but I have really known men to court papa and mamma first, instead of courting the girl. Now that's just fatal! What you want is the girl. Start there! You may get papa and mamma and the whole caravan of relations with you ; but what good will that do if the girl won't have you? On the other hand, if the girl says yes, it can't make much difference—that is in the long run—if the entire clan says no."

The captain and his sister and Walter left the table and entered the library.

"You will stay with us until to-morrow, Walter, won't you?" asked his aunt.

"No, I am sorry, but I must drive down to Donovan to-night. I should like to stay" (and Walter thought how much it would please him to go to the church again and to see and hear Miss Hamilton), "but I must attend to my business, poor as it is, and business requires me to be in Donovan at an earlier hour to-morrow than I could reach there if I stayed here all night."

"I should like you to hear that Indian prince who is to speak. Everybody says he is very eloquent and interesting."

Walter cared little for this eloquent person, or his speeches, or his cause, but he answered:

"It is too bad, but I must go. I hope to return on

Tuesday. Then I shall go up to the city, and, aunt, I intend to give up commercial travelling."

"What will you do then?"

"I know a man connected with one of the daily papers, and I shall try to get upon the staff as an editor, or even a reporter, if I can do no better. I feel confident that I can succeed in that profession."

Walter lighted a cigar and went out to walk about the garden. His mind was occupied with but one subject. He was resolved to know Dorothea Hamilton before another Sunday came. Were there no other way to meet her, he would boldly ask his aunt to devise some method of bringing them together.

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CHAPTER V

INVOLVING THE CHURCH MILITANT

LEAVING his uncle's house at seven o'clock on Sunday evening in a buggy, Walter Drury drove slowly up the street, walking his horse so that he might look again at the house in which lived Miss Hamilton. As he came near he saw her, in a lovely dress of white muslin, standing upon the side-porch which opened upon the garden. She had some bright-coloured flowers in her hand and she was alone. She seemed to be looking out towards the river. Walter gazed intently at her. She turned her head and saw him. He thought she recognized him; he even thought he could perceive the colour flush her cheeks; but instantly she wheeled about and entered the house. She was more beautiful as she had stood there, bare-headed, and in the simple dress, than she had been in church.

He looked at the windows of the house as he drove slowly by, and he believed that he had another glimpse of her within the parlour. He was not sure that she was not looking at him at such distance behind the window as permitted her to be in some measure screened.

Walter urged the horse onward, while he formed another resolution to know her and to win her, if that could be accomplished.

Out beyond the boundaries of the town he drove, while the shadows of the evening deepened towards twilight, and as he pushed on, his mind was so much absorbed by reflection upon the strange experience that had come to

him, that he hardly noticed an open carriage, drawn by two horses, which passed him rapidly, conveying the Rev. Dr. Mallow and the Indian prince, Bunder Poot Singh, who were driving over from Donovan, so that the noble and dusky Oriental might preach to the Rev. Dr. Frobisher's congregation.

Rev. Dr. Frobisher had passed his sixtieth year, and for more than twenty years he had been pastor of the Presbyterian church of Turley. He was a large man, not stout, but heavily built, with massive frame, broad shoulders, large hands and feet. His head, long and high, was covered with thick sandy hair, his nose and chin were strong, and kindly eyes looked out from his golden spectacles.

As a preacher, he had been thought by his friends to have had no little power in his younger days; and some regarded him as a man of more than usual learning. Long ago he had written a pamphlet upon the authorship of the Pentateuch, which was perfectly orthodox, and really attracted much attention.

Later, a brief work, in which he considered the meaning of the Song of Solomon, provoked rather warm controversy, because of the originality of the opinions advanced; and there was a famous sermon of his upon "The Impending Crisis," which, when it was first preached, twenty years ago, created much enthusiasm. As he came down from the pulpit, the elders, backed by the trustees, insisted that he should repeat it on the following Sunday, which he did in the presence of the largest congregation ever assembled in the church on Sunday. Then the church-officers, after consultation, considered that a discourse of such large importance, dealing really with concerns of national interest, should go further upon its errand of beneficence. They asked permission to publish it, and the doctor granted the request, with a genuine effort to feel humble, but still with a strong sense that he was really engaged in doing good, and in playing his part fairly well in the great drama of human life. The edition comprised two thousand copies, but when twelve hundred copies had gone out, the demand

fell away, and the doctor for years had looked now and then upon the remaining eight hundred, tied up with twine and brown paper, and lying dust-covered in the closet beneath one of his book-cases; and, as he looked, he sometimes sighed and had a deepened impression that worldly things after all, at the very best, are little more than vanity.

But the days of excitement and eager expectation, and craving for a swifter forward movement, had now passed away. The fiery zeal for the conversion of the world to better things had burned itself out. Long ago he had been enveloped and smothered by the conviction that any large part of the task of uplifting the race was beyond his power. Still, he held firmly to the old faith. Still, he did really try to believe that he kept himself ready for the day when the summons should come for him.

But he had almost stopped preaching to sinners. The truths were so old, surely everybody must know them by heart by this time; and most of the good texts had been preached threadbare. All of his new sermons were addressed to believers, and this seemed to be not an indefensible practice, for only believers, or people who were believed to be believers, came to church.

There were no young men in the congregation, excepting a few who were kept there by habit or family influence, or by some little interest in the music of the church societies. The greater number of the members were women and girls, whom he could not regard as frightful offenders, and who seemed to be quite satisfied with his preaching.

In truth, the church had gone to sleep with respect to spiritual things, and the good pastor's piety, though sound and genuine, had much of somnolency in it.

Sometimes the doctor found it really hard to discover new subjects for sermons in the Bible, and he did not like to preach the old ones too often. He had a series on the Sermon on the Mount, written in his younger days, and re-written and preached again twice in the last eight years; while his series on the Lord's

Prayer, which he liked very much, had occasioned whispers in the congregation when he began it again four years ago for the third time in ten years.

Now and then it had happened that a younger preacher of considerable powers came to find a place in his pulpit for a single Sunday, and then, as the doctor listened to the eager, fervid oratory, impelled by a soul that was in hot earnest, he felt conscience-stricken, and mentally resolved that he would gird himself anew for the contest; that he would pray more heartily, and would infuse the power of a new life into the church that had been intrusted to him.

And so for a few Sundays he would endeavour to arouse attention, perhaps by preaching from odd texts, such as "Four Carpenters" (Zech. i. 20); or, "Comfort me with apples" (Song of Solomon, ii. 5); or, "He went down and slew a lion in a pit on a snowy day" (1 Chron. 11); or, "My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi" (Song of Solomon, i. 14).

He had a thought once or twice of taking as a subject for a stirring discourse the "Five Foolish Virgins," but, somehow, he shrank from pushing home the conclusions of that parable.

Then, as the influence of the eloquent visitor diminished more and more, the pastor glided back into the old way, and he and the people of the church folded their hands and went to sleep again.

A violent shock of some kind was needed to arouse the shepherd and the sheep, and the shock was soon to be applied.

Mrs. Frobisher always insisted upon spelling the family name with a small "o" and with a dash under that vowel.

She explained that the name was spelled in this manner not only by the original Frobisher, the great navigator, who was practically the founder of the family, but by the contemporary Frobishers, learned and unlearned, and by the subsequent Frobishers through seven or more generations.

The practice, she admitted, had fallen into desuetude, probably through mere carelessness, but possibly because of indifference natural to persons who had matters of large concern to deal with. But that the method of spelling is right, having the warrant of usage at the time the name first came into existence, appeared to her to be beyond dispute, and by adopting it she had simply resumed the ancient practice.

She required also that the name should not be pronounced Fro**b**-isher, with the "o" sounded as in *mob*, but Fro**i**bisher, with the "o" sounded as in *mote* and *boat*.

Her claim was that this was the real purpose of underlining the "o"—making it long; and she never lost an opportunity, when the name was wrongly pronounced through the inadvertence of any of her friends, of re-pronouncing it with strong emphasis, so that the error might have immediate correction.

To Dr. Frobisher the matter seemed to have rather trifling importance; and it vexed his wife not a little that he would, sometimes, when off his guard, in animated conversation, speak of himself or relatives as Frobishers with the "o" as in *mob*.

It had been to Mrs. Frobisher a matter of grave discontent that her husband's given name and hers were Isaiah and Mary. She made up her mind early in her married life that no child of hers should ever be afflicted by the seriously overworked Scripture names.

Thus, when her boy was born, Mrs. Frobisher, after long reflection upon the subject, insisted upon calling him Lochinvar. This the boys at school contracted to "Lucky," and he passed through a not very fortunate existence bearing the name of Lucky Frobisher.

Mrs. Frobisher had active membership in four societies in the city, and honorary membership in nine others in various parts of America and Europe. Besides, she was the president of the General Culture Society of Turley, and she was engaged, with five other women of revolutionary ancestry, in trying to organize a national society composed of women whose ancestors lived in America prior to 1776.

It was part of her pride to be an American through all the lines of her recent ancestry. Her family tree had roots in Great Britain, but no forefather or foremother of hers had come to this continent later than 1704. It was to her one of the most comforting facts of her family history that her mother's great-grandfather had co-operated with Franklin in collecting wagons for General Braddock's famous and tragic campaign in 1755. The name of this ancestor was Smith. Mrs. Frobisher always alluded to him as Commissary-General Smith, or General Smith; and although Florabella Burns, when angry with Mrs. Frobisher upon one occasion, had said that, for the life of her, she could find no trace of any Smith in Franklin's own narrative of this movement, and that if any Smith had been engaged in the operation, he would have been a mere civilian as Franklin was, Mrs. Frobisher had a letter signed by the aforesaid Smith, written at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and not only referring to his connection with Franklin, but signing himself "Commissary-General."

Mrs. Frobisher also claimed that her father's grandfather had been upon the staff of General Anthony Wayne, and that he was severely wounded at Paoli while trying to rally the surprised and panic-stricken troops. Mrs. Frobisher claimed, in fact, that her father's grandfather and General Wayne were the only two persons who did not lose their heads, and she said, her father used to have a letter written to his grandfather by General Wayne, after the war, reminding him of his noble conduct on that fatal night and asking him to pay a visit to the general's house in Chester County, Pennsylvania. This important letter, which would have put Mrs. Frobisher's claim to heroic ancestry upon a basis of solid and incontestable security, had most unfortunately been destroyed when her father's house was burned in the great conflagration in the city many years before.

But it was Mrs. Frobisher's proudest boast that her mother was, to use Mrs. Frobisher's own phrase, "A Metcalf of Aramingo."

The Metcalfs owned half-a-dozen large plantations in the Aramingo neighbourhood, and for nearly a century they had been prominent people in that region.

Colonel Jabez N. Metcalf, her mother's father, had fought a duel with Judge O'Finerty in 1803, and Mrs. Frobisher not infrequently referred to this bloodless combat in such language as became the wife of a Presbyterian pastor, but still a close observer might have discerned in her manner and tone a certain gleam of exultation, which appeared to indicate that she regarded her grandfather's participation in this engagement not without feelings of pride.

More than once she had expressed in terms of much fervour her gratitude that the elder Metcalf had not been slain in this aristocratic encounter; and one day when she had breathed her thankfulness for the fourth or fifth time at a meeting of the General Culture Society, Mrs. McGuire, a perfectly plebeian person, was mean enough to whisper to Florabella Burns that she wished O'Finerty's bullet had gone home.

Mrs. Frobisher's prominence in all the societies, and her assumption of authority generally, found acquiescence that would probably not have been yielded without a struggle, but for the well-known fact that the minister's wife had money in her own right.

It may be imagined that, whatever her spiritual condition, Mrs. Frobisher was not physically torpid.

She was a small woman, with small features and with blue-grey eyes conveying the impression of intensity of character. Mrs. Frobisher had force. She managed every woman's society in the church, and in Sunday School she taught the infant class. Her strong point was thought to be black-board work, supplying object lessons to the infant eye and mind.

Some adult persons who came in to hear her and to see her, sometimes were ungracious enough to say that they did not understand these lessons; but nobody knows where the fault really lay. Perhaps there was indeed some reason for the apprehension expressed by one visitor, that the unfortunate children would come out

from that infant class with a permanent and bitter hatred of black-boards, which, when they entered the public school, would much discourage them as they began the familiar and ceaseless pursuit of the least common multiple.

But, at the very worst, it must be confessed that Mrs. Frobisher's methods of instruction could hardly have been as disheartening to children as were a few of the books that were found in Sunday School libraries at that time, and were indeed in Dr. Frobisher's Sunday School library under the direction of Davis Cook.

In the fifties some of the methods employed by devout writers for the purpose of impregnating young minds with the truth of religion were of a kind that may be considered questionable.

It was not enough to instruct the little ones of the existence of a moral law indicated by the words, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" but worthy persons undertook to present what children were to regard as illustrations of the methods by which the law worked.

Thus affecting, and even terrifying, tales were prepared representing, for example, little girls surreptitiously obtaining jam from the pantry and, in their haste, dropping portions of the preserve upon their pinafores. Endeavouring to remove the guilty stains with water, they saturated their clothing and caught cold. Then they were whirled off into eternity by the swift processes of pneumonia and with no hope at all of better things in heaven. Or little boys were indicated as preferring fishing to Sabbath School on Sunday, and obtaining the just and necessary reward of such wicked preference in the shape of a watery grave.

The children to whom these awful warnings were supplied, and who might have accepted them as helps to the journey along the straight and narrow path, lost much of the force of the instruction, and indeed had their poor little fragments of faith much shaken, by frequent and familiar experimental demonstration that this alleged law of immediate retribution has by no

means unvarying operation. Many of them had their own secret memories of larcenous proceedings with jam, during which none was dropped upon pinafore or floor, and which were productive of deliciousness of sensation of which jam seemed incapable when it had been procured under less irregular and sinful circumstances; and some of them were the familiar friends of boys who, in defiance of envioning perils, often went fishing on Sunday, and came safely home to bear verbal testimony to the delights of the practice, and presenting visible evidence, in the shape of bunches of fish, that the pastime had not been without consequences of substantial value. Thus it may be feared that, as the years rolled by, the young minds, having compared the written testimony of persons whom they did not know, with the evidence supplied by personal experience and by observation of the conduct of persons whom they did know, may really have reached the conclusion that there must be something seriously defective in the assertion that vicious behaviour produces hurtful results, or else that stealing jam and fishing on Sunday are performances which contain no element of evil.

There was one favourite writer for children—a favourite with the parents—who, inspired with a praiseworthy desire to impel them into paths of peace, produced certain volumes which were classed under the general name of Allegories. In these little stories the characters were children. The books were bound in black, to begin with, so that they were dismal and discouraging merely to look at, as they lay upon the table at home.

One of them began with a graphic description of a place called the Desert of Zin. That word Zin, which greeted the infant mind upon the very first page, had in it something that was sinister and fear-inspiring. Sin was bad enough, but sin could be partly comprehended. Zin, however, appeared to have some sort of a kinship to sin, and yet to be infinitely and incomprehensibly more dreadful. Even if Zin had been a place of waving trees and fountains and flowers and birds, it would have been open to grave suspicions that behind these beautiful

INVOLVING THE CHURCH MILITANT

objects lurked some mysterious destructive force, concerning which children might have apprehensions and would do well to keep their wits about them. But Zin, far from having any alluring scenery, was represented as a dreary, dead, forbidding desert, in which was no kind of vegetable life but prickly things to catch and tear you, and no animal life excepting snakes and scorpions, ever alert to bite and poison you.

Most of the boy readers felt that they could pull through safely with snakes alone, because you can at the worst kill a snake with a stick, and wait for his tail to die at sundown; but the habits, and indeed the very outlines, of the scorpion were unknown, and so the assured presence of scorpions which lay in wait for errant boys appeared to make that wilderness of Zin in a particular sense terrible. Every healthy boy felt as if he would like very much to stay away from it; but this the kindly author assured him he could not do, for the wilderness of Zin, in the allegory, represented this green, old rolling earth of ours, and the journey across the cactus-planted, scorpion-haunted desert stood for the human life that every good and bad boy must live.

Some very bold boys felt that, bad as was the outlook presented by the author, they could face the horrors of the journey with the boys and girls in the book if these had been named Jim and Aleck, and Mary Jane; but the writer of the allegory knew the child-mind, and he was too acute to supply any such excuse for diminishing the miseries of the situation. The boys were named Ulric and Bertram and Alaric and Perseus, and the girls were Hilda and Ethelberta and Ursula,—names belonging to no children known to the poor little American Sunday School scholar, and conveying to his mind the notion that about these very boys and girls themselves there was something elfish and uncanny.

All through the book Ulric and Hilda tramped across the desert, striving in a desperate and most discouraging manner to reach some kind of a Promised Land, away off somewhere, and as the Sunday School child of thoughtful mind read and read, he was likely to reach

the conclusion that the best thing the Promised Land had to offer wasn't worth all that misery, and finally to give his sympathy and his approval to Alaric and Ethelberta, who didn't try hard enough and so missed the Promised Land and were lost somewhere in the desert.

The author had another book which made an impression upon some of his child-readers that half a century has not availed to efface. It was called *The Great Army*. The principal character was a very human kind of a boy named Adrian. This boy, apparently without giving to the matter the kind of serious reflection which always, in the case of rightly-constructed boys, precedes important action, enlisted in the Great Army and agreed to stand fast by its rules and regulations. But, after awhile, when the Great Army met the foe face to face, something or other about the enemy exercised a fascinating influence upon Adrian's mind. Just what it was that struck Adrian so favourably was not wholly clear; but the temptation came to him in an alluring form, and he at once forgot all of his vows of allegiance to the Great Army, left the ranks and went right over towards the foe, with the purpose to enlist on that side against his recent friends.

But Adrian was not permitted to go very far. Half-way between the opposing forces a bottomless pit—actually bottomless—had been arranged, and the unhappy deserter of course stumbled into it and fell.

The faithful members of the Great Army not only saw him fall, but the author explains that they could hear Adrian's frightful yells, growing fainter and more faint as his descent was accelerated, in accordance, it may be presumed, with the law of gravitation governing the movement of falling bodies.

That was an awful story. No doubt many a poor little urchin, after reading it with tingling nerves and creeping flesh, went to bed afraid of the darkness, and wondering what kind of an existence this is, anyhow, into which he had been thrust without consent or connivance on his own part.

It is to be feared, also, that more than one boy who read and reflected upon the meaning of these stories made up his mind, in a desperate kind of a way as he began to grow in years, to have all the fun within reach, at any rate, and to let the chances with respect to consequences just stand open.

If the author of these books could have had the guidance of that best of all the faculties, named common-sense, but which indeed should be called uncommon-sense, he would have perceived the futility of the attempt to frighten children into heaven; and the wrong to them, and to the Master who loved them, and would take them up in His arms and bless them, of trying by such means to impel them to embrace a faith whose very foundation-stones are love and joy and peace.

The church building contained a large audience when the carriage holding Dr. Mallow and Bander Root Singh stopped at the door opening into Dr. Frobisher's study. Saul Tarsel was too busy with the bell-rope to enter his services at the carriage; but Dr. Frobisher had been looking for the guests, and quickly he emerged from his study, and opening the door of the carriage, invited the two visitors to descend.

When they had done so, Dr. Mallow presented the stranger to his fellow-clergyman, and the appearance and courtly grace of the Indian made an immediate favourable impression upon Dr. Frobisher, as they always did upon those who met the prince for the first time.

The impression was strengthened by the brief conversation that followed when the three men had passed into the study. Dr. Frobisher felt that the words of praise of the prince that had come to him from other clergymen had not been too strong. Manifestly, this was a choice man, and the doctor was gratified to believe that the highest expectations of the crowd of waiting and curious people in the pews were about to be fulfilled.

He was a fine-looking fellow, and he presented a singularly handsome figure as, with the two clergymen, he walked out upon the pulpit platform and sat upon one of the three chairs placed there.

He was tall, slender, well-proportioned, straight. Upon his head he wore a white turban which he did not remove, and his body was clothed in grey silk, with loose trousers and loose-fitting coat of Eastern pattern, while around his waist was a rich blue silk sash, fastened at the side, and with the fringed ends falling almost to the floor.

The hue of his skin was brown, light brown, while his hair and heavy moustache were jet black. So were his eyes, which seemed to have extraordinary brilliancy. Everybody thought his countenance full of manly beauty, and that it manifested singular intellectual power.

He was completely self-possessed. He knew that hundreds of people were looking at him, but he seemed at ease, unconscious of the presence of the congregation, and indeed manifesting plainly that he was accustomed to prominence, to homage, and to admiration.

With reverence of demeanour and action he participated in the devotional exercises, and he listened with close attention when Dr. Mallow read the Scriptures and when the choir sang an anthem.

The anthem was lovely and affecting, and Mrs. Frobisher thought he wiped away a tear as the music went on ; but of this she was not positively certain ; for he had passed his handkerchief over his face more than once during the exercises.

When sermon-time came, Dr. Mallow rose and said that the congregation was about to be addressed by one of the trophies of the missionary effort. Many converts had been made among the natives of India as the result of heroic, devoted, self-sacrificing endeavour upon the part of faithful men and women who had gone thither to carry to souls darkened by centuries of heathenism the blessed light of the everlasting Gospel. But now, in these last days, it had come

to pass that the illuminating power of the Truth was no longer to enter the souls only of the poorest and the humblest. Adapted as it is to the needs of every human being, it had been found precious to a man who held a kingly place, whose ancestors for unknown centuries had sat upon thrones and wielded sceptres and exercised power of life and death over literally millions of people. His noble friend, Bunder Poot Singh, had become a Christian, at such loss to him of influence, affection, and respect as no American could conceive, and having accepted the Truth and turned his steps in the right way, he had found his longings going out, as was inevitable in the case of a converted man, to the forlorn and desolate and oppressed members of his own race. He had resolved to devote himself to the work of uplifting the pariahs of India, people who were outcast and despised, and in a condition of unspeakable moral, physical, and religious degradation. To this work the prince had consecrated the whole of his own vast fortune, and now he had come to this Christian land to ask of the people who have the light of high civilization, the direct fruit of religion, to help him to carry the message of peace and hope to the people who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Dr. Mallow concluded by relating what had been done for the good cause in his own church, and by expressing the hope that the church in Turley would do as well, or better. Then he introduced Bunder Poot Singh.

The prince stepped to the front of the platform, and in a soft, sweet, musical voice, gave out the text :

"Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance."

His enunciation was perfect—his lowest tone could be heard distinctly in the most distant part of the room. He spoke English without the smallest trace of accent. His language was felicitous in phrase, clearly interpretive of his meaning, and now and then it actually had a kind of poetic beauty. Nature made him an orator; more than phrase or vocal tone, there was a subtle charm of manner which touched the soul of the hearer and aroused

emotion. Before the prince had spoken ten minutes all the women in the church were in tears, and Dr. Frobisher was seen to apply his handkerchief to his eyes several times in a suspicious manner.

Bunder Poot Singh spoke for three-quarters of an hour, and not one of his hearers would have been sorry if he had doubled the length of his discourse.

When he sat down, the deacons began to take the collection, and as they brought the filled plates to the platform there was visible proof of the fact that the prince had the kind of eloquence which can influence even the reluctant pocket-book.

Dr. Frobisher then announced that the distinguished stranger would return to Turley in a few months, to remain for some time. The minister expressed the feeling of satisfaction with which he anticipated this longer visit from one to whom he and all the people there present owed one of the most noble, uplifting and inspiring discourses to which they had ever listened.

Then the doctor closed the services with prayer.

Bunder Poot Singh and the clergymen remained upon the platform, and several prominent members of the church came forward to be presented to the stranger. Among them was John Hamilton, who clasped the prince's hand, thanked him for his address, and promised him a warm welcome when he should come to Turley again.

If, indeed, coming events do cast their shadows before, how John Hamilton would have trembled at one such shadow if it had fallen athwart his path as he clasped that dusky hand!

But he saw nothing, as men in such cases always see nothing, and so Hamilton returned to his wife, and with her left the church full of enthusiasm for the Hindoo.

That was the common feeling. Mrs. Frobisher voiced it when she said to Mrs. Gridley :

"Now we know what the words mean, 'speaking with the tongues of angels.' Did you ever hear such exquisite oratory? So noble in bearing, too! You can see the

prince in every liniment. Blood does tell, always, doesn't it?"

"But wasn't it horrid to have that water-motor give out again, while he was here?" responded Mrs. Gridley.

"Perfectly horrid," said Mrs. Frobisher. "I was mortified beyond expression. I shall ask the trustees to have the detestable thing removed from the cellar. What *could* the prince have thought of us?"

The water-motor alone had marred the charm of an occasion which had in it all the elements of complete felicity, but if Bunder Poot Singh had at all observed that something was wrong with the organ during the second hymn, he had not manifested consciousness of the fact. The probability was that his acquaintance with machinery of that kind, and its methods of operation, was not familiar; and, besides, a man whose whole nature has been surrendered to the cause of uplifting a fallen race, could not reasonably be expected to direct his attention, even momentarily, to the accidental dislocation of small mechanical appliances.

The water-motor had really given no little trouble to the trustees.

Judge Irwin McGann always attended service at Dr. Frobisher's church on Sundays when he could find time for that purpose. It was believed that his desire was to be devout, and to obtain profit from the preacher's discourses; but more than once when he had been spoken to after church about the sermon, he answered in such a way as to convey the impression that his mind had been engaged with other matters, while the doctor's eloquence was pouring over him. And in truth, those who sat in the side pews and could glance at Judge McGann, while the preacher was speaking, usually noticed a far-away look in the judge's face, as if his mental part were engaged in considering cog-wheels and pressures and centres of gravity, rather than in obtaining nourishment from the sincere milk of the Word.

There seemed indeed to be some reason for believing that Judge McGann, while sitting in church, passed

through all the mental processes which enabled him to invent his famous water-motor.

It was always a kind of grief to the judge that the church should depend upon a boy for supplying motive power to the organ. There seemed to be a waste of energy to employ a human being to perform a service which the judge felt sure might be better done by the pressure lying inert in the water-mains in the street right outside of the church door. Besides, sometimes the boy played truant, and then Uncle Tarsel was called upon to blow, which he did with feelings of indignation expressed in sighs and groans plainly heard when the organist was using the softer stops.

And even when the boy was at his post he was often drowsy. He was indeed the drowsiest boy in or near to Turley. He fell asleep so often that the trustees, disliking to deprive his widowed mother of the income derived from his compensation as blower, arranged with her to have him sent to bed early on Friday and Saturday nights, and permit him to sleep late on Saturday and Sunday mornings so that he might, as it were, sleep up ahead with the result that mere satiated nature would keep him awake on Sundays; but the mother reported that the plan could hardly be made to work in a satisfactory manner, because the boy, if sent to bed early, always went to sleep later than if he had gone at the usual hour, and never failed to wake with the earliest dawn on Saturday and Sunday mornings. She was even so imprudent as to hint that the boy did the best that any boy could do while within the hearing of Dr. Frobisher's long prayer. She said plainly that she could hardly keep awake herself, and the trustees inclined to believe that there was an hereditary tendency to excessive sleepiness in her family.

Judge McGann worked out his plan for a motor which should be actuated by pressure from the water-works, of which there was more than enough; and he constructed a working model in wood, that really did seem to contain a promise of high efficiency. The board of trustees agreed to bear the cost of construction, and the

model with the working drawings was turned over to Davis Cook, the plumber, who acted as librarian for the Sunday School.

The motor, when it was finished and applied, worked very well at the first rehearsal, and did noble service during the opening voluntary and the first hymn, but right in the middle of the second hymn the organ stopped with a huge sob, and refused to go on. Thereupon Judge McGann and Davis Cook rose from their seats, while the choir struggled along without instrumental accompaniment, and on tiptoes the two men went to the cellar door and disappeared. In a few moments they returned, and the judge walked softly up to the pulpit, where Dr. Frobisher was giving out notices, and explained that the pressure had been suddenly taken off from the pipe, probably by a locomotive filling its tender down at the railroad station.

The organ did very well all the rest of the morning, but in the evening there was another collapse, and as both Judge McGann and Davis Cook stayed at home that evening, Uncle Tarsel was called upon to go behind the scenes and to apply propulsion to the bellows-handle.

On the next Sunday morning the organ with another convulsive sob relapsed into silence at the beginning of the third verse of the second hymn, and the judge and Davis Cook rose and again vanished through the cellar door. They could be heard by the congregation scolding about the failure of the motor as they stood in the cellar. It was plain enough that Davis Cook was twisting off a nut with his monkey-wrench while the judge said, in an angry tone, half muffled:

"I told you not to put that valve in upside down."

And Davis Cook, making a very unseemly noise with the monkey-wrench, answered:

"A man who makes a working model of a thing that won't work ain't got good sense nohow."

In a few moments they came into church again, hot and breathless and angry, and when Judge McGann resumed his seat it was with a vexed countenance, which soon began to smooth down as the absent look came

into his eyes, and he strove to think out an improved auxiliary valve, while Dr. Frobisher passed on into "thirdly."

The feeling began to grow among the trustees that perhaps it might be better, out of consideration for the widow and the orphan who had been in a sense displaced by the machinery, to summon again to service that somnolent boy; and this feeling, which was strengthened by the collapse of the motor during the singing of one of the hymns at the missionary meeting at which Bunder Poot Singh spoke, ripened into strong decisive purpose when, on the succeeding Saturday, as the choir gathered for rehearsal, it was found that the inlet pipe to the motor had been leaking since Sunday, and the church cellar was navigable for boats not drawing more than four inches.

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CHAPTER VI

THE HERO BEARS THE HEROINE HOMEWARD

It was a wise man among the citizens of Turley who, in a year long past, persuaded the Town Council to use public money for the purchase of Graver's Point, so that the people, for all time to come, might have a playground and a resting-place prepared for those uses by Nature in such fashion as to surpass almost any possible achievement by the hand of man.

The Point was the end of a ridge which came down from the hills two miles and more away; a ridge having continually diminishing elevation until, crossing the sand-beach that bordered the river, it thrust itself right out into the stream, a hundred yards beyond the low-water line, and then dropped off sharply, making a cliff, perpendicular, smooth, not available for ascent or descent, and at the base, with water deep enough to float a ship of any draught.

It was a great natural pier projected boldly into the stream. A few yards back from the beach the public road surmounted and traversed the ridge; but, between the road and the cliff was a plateau not less than six hundred feet wide; and this was thick-planted with shrubs and evergreens and mighty deciduous trees, amid which gravel-walks turned and twisted, bordered with flowering plants.

Here and there benches were placed for loiterers, and far out near the end of the Point was a concourse and a small pavilion, while all about were benches and chairs,

whereon a Turley person might sit in the shade amid the sweet odours of the resinous bushes and look up the river, down the river, or across the river, whilst the summer breeze, whether it blew from north or blew from south, brought with it coolness and refreshing.

It was creditable to Turley, not wise usually when it dealt officially with matters of public enjoyment, that it should have obtained possession of this lovely place, and should have consented cheerfully to bear the cost of adorning it and maintaining it.

The Point was near enough to the town to permit the authorities easily to care for it, and to make it a secure and proper place for women and children to visit without other protection, and yet it was far enough away, and so shrouded and shut-in by the foliage of its vegetation, that there was seclusion in agreeable measure for those who wished for it.

When the sun grew warm in the summer days, all Turley that had time to spare came to the Point; and while the little children romped and played, and the wide-eyed babies stared from their coaches as they always do, as if their minds were filled with unutterable astonishment at the wonderfulness of the wonderful world into which they had come; and while the boys went in to swim from the bath-houses upon the beach below and filled the air with merriment, and the many women and the few men strolled about or sat and talked in the later hours of the afternoon, sometimes the Turley brass band would enter the pavilion, and with horn and drum and flageolet make music for the company.

The Turley brass band always did its best. Perhaps this was not the best that was within the reach of *any* band the rolling earth around—the world is so big—but the band, while affecting modesty, really believed that it was best; or, to make some kind of a concession, that no band played any better than the Turley band played.

One thing the band had resolved upon. It would never again engage in a contest with other bands, because in these rivalries the judges are always governed by prejudice, even if they have skill enough in music to

HERO BEARS THE HEROINE HOMEWARD 81

permit them to form correct opinions. The Turley band had participated in the famous brass band tournament at Barkley, New York, just two years before the date at which this tale begins. It had practised for eight months before the contest, under the direction of a German bandmaster, who had served for six and a half years in the United States army and had himself had long training in his home country under master-musicians. With his guidance the Turley band had practised and practised almost night and day, until the Turley people who lived near to the band-room began to find the burden of existence heavy almost beyond the point of endurance; and when the last rehearsal ended and the bandmaster was about to return to Washington, he cheered the organization with the assurance that unless it came home from Barkley with the first prize, there could be no doubt that Justice had forsaken her accustomed seat, so that Perfidy might be enthroned thereon.

This most nefarious and alarming substitution did seem actually to have been made, for while the gold medal was given to a rather gaudily attired organization from Connecticut, known as Buchanan's Silver Trumpeters, and the silver medal was awarded to the Barnegat Horn and Flute Corps of Barnegat, New Jersey, the bronze medal went to the brass band of Willahickon, Pennsylvania, which had a coloured man for a drummer, and which, the Turley band perceived, violated all the rules of the German preceptor every time it fingered a key or jingled a triangle.

When the judges, after allotting the prizes, announced that the Turley brass band was entitled to "honourable mention," the drum-major put his baton under his arm, lifted his helmet to wipe his forehead, and turning to the band, charged full with disgust and disdain, wheeled it by the right flank, marched to the station in silence, and came home, resolved never again to attempt to uplift to the level of true art the musical perceptions of people upon whom Fate had inflicted the misfortune that they should live away from Turley.

For in Turley the band was appreciated, the impulse

to criticism always being blunted by the requirements of loyalty, and by familiarity with the general benevolence of the organization. And as the band, of a summer afternoon, came out to the Point and spread its sheets in the pavilion, and began to toot and rumble and thump, the loiterers in the little park, sitting there and looking out over the flowing river and breathing the soft, sweet air, gave welcome to the music and applause to the musicians, while they rejoiced that Turley had such a pleasure-ground, such a view upon the noble river, and such a chance to hear such a band provide harmonies so noble.

Two women, a matron and a maid, sat alone upon Graver's Point in the shade of a spreading tree, near to the edge of the cliff in the morning of Tuesday of the week which Walter Drury had begun by going to church in Turley.

The matron was Mrs. Florabella Burns; her companion was Dorothea Hamilton.

Two or three children played in the park, back toward the highway, and two or three nursemaids idly watched them, and cared for infants sleeping in coaches. It was too early in the day for the throng to attend.

The two women sat together upon one of the slatted benches looking out upon the sun-lit river, whereon a ship with great masts and furled sails, and with a tug-boat leading her, moved slowly up the stream against the swift-rushing tide.

Mrs. Burns had her fingers busily employed with some kind of knitting, upon which now and then she dropped her eyes. Miss Hamilton held in one hand a closed book that she had thought to read, but she had not yet opened it. She liked better the talk with her agreeable companion, and so hand and book rested upon her lap, while she watched the craft upon the river.

Mrs. Burns was fair to look upon, for what more charming creature is there than a woman who has reached the age of forty with her complexion unfaded, her face as smooth as if she were only twenty, her form

HERO BEARS THE HEROINE HOMEWARD 83

rounded to the most beautiful of the lines of beauty, and her hair thick and clustering and untinged with grey?

Mrs. Burns for ten years had been widowed, but grief had not ravaged her person. They said in her youth that she had golden hair; and now it had darkened into a richer hue of brown and red, and it surmounted a face of that peculiar pearly whiteness which is often found with such hair. Her eyes were dark, and they made her complexion seem more beautiful by contrast. The shape of her head and face was good, the nose was small with the least upward turn at the end, and pretty red lips opened to disclose teeth unmarred by the dentist's art.

She was very fond of Dorothea Hamilton, who was odd enough to prefer the close friendship of this mature woman to that of girls of her own age, although she was not averse, either, to girls and girl frolics.

Mrs. Burns had very sharp wits and well-cultivated wits. She would have been good company for any sane and wise person; and she brought much to the life of the younger woman, whose experience had been narrow, but in whom Mrs. Burns perceived sweetness and loveliness of character that were not common in Turley—not common anywhere.

They had fled away from the town on this warm summer morning to sit beneath the shade in the gentle wind that drifted over the Point, and to have a good quiet talk; and better still, that satisfaction which such friends find in mere companionship apart from contact with other people. Not always in talk, but sometimes in silence and self-communing, does companionship find its keenest pleasure.

"You were speaking, Dorry," said Mrs. Burns, giving a pull upon her thread, which tumbled the ball of thread to the ground, "of the Indian prince who preached on Sunday. Do you know I didn't half like that man?"

"I heard you didn't," said Miss Hamilton.

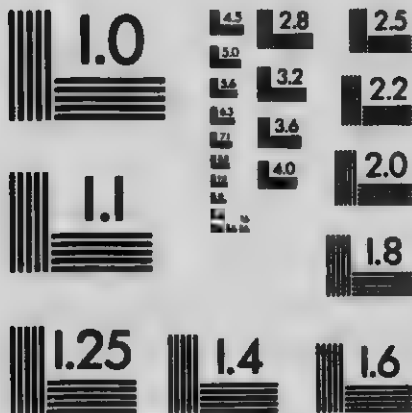
"Who told you?" asked Mrs. Burns.

"Mrs. Frobisher said to mother that she heard you



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didn't fancy him. But what do you think she guessed was the reason?"

"What?"

Miss Hamilton laughed.

"She said she thought it must be because you are an Episcopalian, and disliked to have persons preach who are not in the apostolical succession!"

Mrs. Burns smiled and said:

"How absurd! I don't know myself precisely why I regarded him unfavourably. Certainly his appearance and manner and speech were fine. But there was a look in his eyes that seemed to me to be—well, what shall I say?—of a kind to excite distrust."

"Do you know that I felt in the same way?" said Miss Hamilton.

"Well, then, I am right," answered Mrs. Burns. "Women often have a kind of intuition about such things which is better than reasoning or evidence. You are just the kind of woman who would be likely to possess that faculty."

"All the other women in the church thought the man wonderful," said Dorothea. "Mrs. Frobisher's enthusiasm was unbounded."

"Yes, he is wonderful," answered Mrs. Burns, "but that is not the point. Is he sincere? This is the important question. Mrs. Frobisher is the sort of woman who would not have the intuition I have referred to. She is too emotional, too intense, too likely to be attracted by outward appearances."

"You saw the splendid diamond the Indian wore upon his breast?"

"Every woman in the room noticed that; but you and I, perhaps, were almost alone in thinking that the money locked up in that magnificent jewel would do much to help the pariahs."

"I did think so," answered Dorothea.

"Of course. My way would have been to say to him:—'Sell your diamond first and then come to Turley to scrape up what you can among a lot of poor Presbyterians.' Do you know, Dorry, that I saw the man

looking at you with some fervour of admiration while you were singing that solo?"

"No! I knew nothing of it. I should have been embarrassed if I had observed it. Perhaps he is a musician himself?"

"Quite likely; but he will wait a good while before he hears any music more lovely than that you gave to him."

"Don't say that. I shall think you are making fun of me."

"No! You sing as if your soul had mingled with your voice."

"So it does, maybe," answered Dorothea, with a smile. "Music is more to me than mere sound."

"How do you mean?"

"I am sure I cannot explain myself clearly; but you know, after all, what we call the voice, in singing, is not simply the operation of air upon the vocal cords."

"No!"

"The cords are an instrument operated by something; by what? Why, of course, by the spiritual nature, the soul, or whatever we may call it, of the singer. Far more truly than when we speak, does the soul manifest itself in singing; I mean the right kind of singing. The soul sings, doesn't it, when the performer feels deep emotion in directing the voice?"

"Yours does, anyhow, I should think," responded Mrs. Burns.

Dorothea did not answer for a moment. Her cheek flushed, and her eyes looked out over the wide waters beneath and beyond. Eyes of bluish-grey, clear, bright, penetrating. When she looked straight at you, those eyes seemed to have a peculiar force, as if they saw far into the recesses of the spirit. The girl had no self-consciousness; there was perfect artlessness, conveying the impression of immeasurable purity. Indeed, was it not, as Florabella Burns had often said as she observed Dorothea's apparently complete unconsciousness of her physical beauty and of her vocal gifts, that the soul was pure? pure with that kind of purity which one day will permit vision of the Almighty! To have known such a

woman is a high form of religious experience. Blessed is the man who can call such a woman wife !

"There is something about music," said Dorothea, speaking again, "that is mysterious and inexplicable to me. You say it is air-vibration, and so it is. But what amazing power it sometimes has to touch the feelings ! not the nerves, not any part of the physical sensibilities, but that part which is moved, for instance, when one engages in earnest prayer."

"What is the quality, do you think ?"

"I have often wondered. Back of the science of music as it is composed and written, back of the physical action, back of everything heard or seen, is a quality which appears to me to belong to the other world—to some world that is near to us, but hidden from us. You remember what the Bible says about the singing of the morning stars, and what Shakespeare also says of the singing orbs. Maybe they do indeed sing ; but that is physical, if it is a fact. I would rather hear a human soul sing ; that is to me a vibration from heaven."

"What a curious thing it is too," continued the girl, "that the minor keys should always be sad ! How can anybody account for that strange fact ? The very same notes that are in the minor keys are in the major keys, but, because they follow in a changed order, one is joyous and the other often melancholy enough to make you cry."

"Did you ever associate colours with the keys ?" asked Mrs. Burns.

Dorothea turned to her, and with an eager look upon her face, exclaimed :

"Have you noticed that, too ?"

"Why, yes," answered Mrs. Burns. "I never gave the subject much thought, but the key of F major always seems to me to have a light blue colour."

"How delightful !" answered Dorothea, smiling. "I thought that was my own private, personal discovery."

"And the key of G major never fails to suggest yellow."

"Yes ; with me, F major is light blue, and the shade

of the blue deepens as the flats increase, until you get down to D flat major, and that is dark purple. How sombre and melancholy that key is! G major is yellow, and the colour deepens with the added sharps until E major is dark orange, and F sharp major is almost a deep crimson. All the minor keys are pale cold greys of various shades. Isn't it wonderful? Doesn't it show that music has hidden in it things that connect it strangely with other apparently different things?"

"It is strange," said Mrs. Burns, "that both of us should have had similar impressions of the matter, but after all, I am not sure that there is anything but a physical phenomenon. Music represents vibrations which reach our brains through our ears. Colour represents vibrations which reach our brains through our eyes. It does not seem unreasonable that Nature should produce similar impressions by means of different kinds of vibrations, does it?"

"Perhaps not; but there are other particulars about music which no physical reasons can explain. It is the only science I know of that seems to have relations with spiritual things. No wonder it has been the belief always that the angels sing."

"The notion that the keys indicate colours is not new, I think," said Mrs. Burns. "I have a friend who knows a Scotch musician who thinks he has found the original elements of the Scotch plaids in popular Scottish melodies."

"That's a queer idea, isn't it?"

"I don't remember the whole of his theory; but he is convinced, for example, that the colours and even the design of the British flag are imbedded somehow in 'God Save the Queen,' and that only red and white and blue tones are to be found in the 'Star-Spangled Banner.'"

"It is incredible," said Dorothea.

"Very likely," replied Mrs. Burns, "but musicians are apt to be queer. Don't marry a musician, Dorry," said the older woman, quietly, coming back to practical matters. She was fonder of them.

"And why not?"

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Burns, starting a new row of her knitting, "music may be heavenly, and probably it is, but my observation is that musicians are often the most disagreeable people upon earth, and the hardest to live with peaceably; and if you marry one you have to live with him on the earth."

"Perhaps they are unusually sensitive?"

"It may be; but they are apt also to be, I think, unusually conceited and selfish, and likely to make their wives unhappy. The fact is that a man who is always playing with the emotions is not half as safe a man for a husband as a man who is more absorbed in earthly and less sensitive things."

"But we should hardly like to have husbands who are dull and prosy, and without sentiment."

"No, but supersensitiveness is worse than prosy dullness. A good husband may well have a touch of the heavenly; but he will be better for a strong flavour of earthiness. I have seen many utterly miserable musicians' wives. Playing well on the fiddle, after all, is not so very much of an accomplishment. I would rather have a husband who would go to sleep during a concert, and yet was a manly man, with a kind heart and a bread-and-butter-producing quality, than an artist who spent his life under the conviction that twanging strings is a heavenly vocation, from which bread-and-butter-hunting ought not to divert him."

"I don't pretend to know much about it," said Dorry with a smile.

"But I do," replied Mrs. Burns positively, "and I want to warn you."

"I am in no danger, I think," said Dorothea.

"Lots of married misery would be avoided," continued Mrs. Burns, "if girls knew in the first place whom to fall in love with, and in the second place, how to manage a husband after marriage."

"You have a recipe?" asked Dorothea.

"Nobody can give a rule for choosing a husband, for each case has its peculiarities; but it is easy enough to

offer a recipe for managing a fairly good man after you marry him."

"For instance?"

"Start with the fact, not known to all women, that all men, married or unmarried, hate more than they hate any other thing, to have any woman's disfavour. That is elementary, fundamental, instinctive. Then, when you have him, coddle him!"

"Coddle him!"

"Coddle him. Act as if you thought him even better and wiser than he thinks he is, and that means good and wise beyond anything the human race has ever known, and show him that you love him with the most intense devotion—devotion such as only the good and wise are worthy of. He will think you the wisest of women because you discern his greatness, and he will love you, and then, after awhile, you will come really to believe he is the wisest and the best, and will desperately love him. That's the whole secret," said Florabella, with the air and tone of a woman from whom no matrimonial secrets are hid.

The younger woman looked troubled.

"Somehow," she said, "I do not like to hear you speak in that way."

"Well, it was not wise," answered Mrs. Burns, with a little pang of regret. "No, it is really better than that."

"I do not know," said Dorothea, "but I am sure that if I loved some one dearly, I should not wish to manage him or to flatter him. I would be willing to die for him or with him, and if he should die I should care for nothing but to go to him."

Then she coloured a little bit and felt sorry, as she remembered that her companion was widowed.

"You dear girl," exclaimed Mrs. Burns, reaching over and seizing Dorothea's hand, "you are right. That is true marriage; that is happiness. I spoke foolishly. There is no right wedlock that is not spiritual."

"And that is holy, isn't it?"

"Holy! Yes, holy! Its source is Divine. It is the very highest visible form of the Love that God is. It is

from Him and to Him. There is spiritual attraction, and then fusion, until two become one. Forgive me for being flippant about a sacred thing. You are better fitted to teach me, than I to teach you, my dear."

As Mrs. Burns spoke, Dorothea turned her head to look out upon the river. She might have intended to respond to her companion, but before she could do so, she sprang up in excitement and exclaimed:

"Look at that child!"

One of the smallest of the little girls who had been running about the pavilion, had wandered to the very edge of the cliff, and sitting down, had extended her feet beyond the frail bordering of sod that surmounted the rock. It had long been thought by careful persons that the Turley government should have put a railing at this place; but the duty had been neglected.

The child was in a most perilous position. A slight movement of its body, the smallest crumbling of the earth, would have tumbled it down the rock into deep water below.

Dorothea Hamilton ran forward with flushed cheeks and eager steps, and approached the little girl, who turned her head and actually began to slip over the brink of the precipice as Dorothea, flinging herself flat upon the ground, grasped the child's dress and held her. Even then, had not the hold been firm, and the dress-stuff stout, the child would have been lost.

But Dorothea did not relax her grasp, and in a moment Mrs. Burns, the girl's nurse, and two or three other women were at hand, and the child was drawn back to safety.

"Well done, Dorry!" said Mrs. Burns. "Well done! You are a heroine. You have saved that child's life!" And Mrs. Burns held out her hand that she might help her friend to rise.

Dorothea made an effort to get up, but found she could not do so.

"I must have sprained my ankle," she said. "It pains me dreadfully."

Calling another woman to her assistance, Mrs. Burns

and the new-comer lifted Dorothea and almost carried her to the bench whereon she and Mrs. Burns had been sitting.

"It seems to me my ankle-joint must really be dislocated," said the sufferer as she sat down.

Mrs. Burns removed the shoe and stocking from the hurt foot.

"I think it is only a sprain," she said. "I will tie my handkerchief about it."

"But how am I to get home?" asked Dorothea, "I cannot walk a step."

"We shall have to send to town for a carriage, of course; unless I can find some one we know driving along the road."

"I see a wagon coming from town now, ma'am," said one of the nurses. "Maybe we could get it to take Miss Hamilton."

Mrs. Burns walked out towards the highway, and in a moment found that the vehicle was a buggy, in which sat the familiar and welcome figure of Dr. Quelch.

She signalled to him to stop, and as the doctor drove up beside her at the edge of the rock, she said:

"O Doctor Quelch, but I am glad to see you!"

"What is the matter?"

"Dorry Hamilton has sprained her ankle, so that she is unable to walk. Won't you look at it, and then—then—maybe you will help us to carry her home."

"Let us see about it," said the physician, getting down from his carriage and tying his horse to a tree.

"Dorry," said Mrs. Burns, as the doctor came with her, "here is Dr. Quelch, who has turned up at exactly the right moment, just as people who are wanted always do in the story-books."

Dorry laughed and said:

"There is nobody I would rather see just now."

"It is a sprain," said the doctor, as he examined it. "Not so bad as it might be, but you must not put your foot upon the ground for at least a week. I will bind it up in a better way."

The physician went to his carriage and returned with

a bandage and some liquid material. Wetting the ankle thoroughly he bound it tightly, and then, as Mrs. Burns put on the sufferer's stocking, Dr. Quelch said:

"And now the problem is to take her home. I can put you in my buggy, but I have a pressing call a mile or two down the road, and I really wish you would wait until I come back. But, no! I shan't lose many minutes going to your house and back. I'll take you."

"How shall she get to the carriage?" asked Mrs. Burns.

Dr. Quelch felt his chin with one hand, as he always did when he had a problem to solve. Then he said:

"Well, I suppose I could drive right in here, but it is against the rules, and I don't like to break good rules unless there is no other way. Can't we manage to carry her?" he asked Mrs. Burns.

Dorothea protested that the burden would be much too heavy for anybody; but Dr. Quelch thought that he could manage it if one of the nurses would help, and so, putting his hands into those of the nurse, the patient seated herself upon them and quickly and safely reached the road.

The doctor turned the buggy partly round, so that entrance to it would be easier, and then he brought one of the benches from a near-by path, so that Dorothea could be lifted upon it half-way to the floor of the carriage upon which she could then contrive to step.

"Wait a moment," said the doctor. "Here is another carriage coming up the road and bound for Turley. Maybe we can arrange for it to take you, while I push on to help my patient who urgently needs me."

The carriage came nearer.

"There is but one person in it. A young man too. Here again, as in the story-books," he said, smiling, "is the brave knight coming to rescue the fair lady."

The stranger reached the place where the party stood and looked curiously at the group.

"Young man, are you going right on to Turley?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir," responded the occupant of the buggy.

"You are not a Turley man, I think?" suggested Dr. Quelch.

"No," said the youth, who was looking rather eagerly at Miss Hamilton, "but I half belong there. I am Captain Bluitt's nephew, Walter Drury."

"Good!" exclaimed the physician. "You are lucky," he said to Dorothea. "And you are lucky too, young man! Here is a friend of mine who has turned her ankle so that she cannot walk. I was about to take her home, but I must neglect an important case to do so. Will you take her?"

"With the greatest pleasure," said Walter, leaping from the buggy. He had recognized her. His heart was filled with joy because of the chance that had brought him there. Suppose he had come sooner or later, or had returned by the back road?

"This is Miss Dorothea Hamilton, Walter, and this is Mrs. Burns," said the doctor. "I know your uncle well."

Walter greeted the women with his finest courtesy.

Then Dr. Quelch brought the bench to the wheel of Drury's carriage, and while Walter held the horse's head, the doctor and Mrs. Burns and the nurse succeeded in placing the injured girl in the vehicle.

"If you will drive home slowly, I will walk with you," said Mrs. Burns.

"No, no, no," exclaimed Walter. "You get into the buggy and I will walk and hold the reins and drive."

"You can't do that," said Mrs. Burns.

"Why not?" asked Walter.

"The road is dreadfully muddy too," said Dorothea's companion.

"Not more muddy for me than for you," responded Walter. "No, if you won't ride, why then both of us will walk."

Mrs. Burns stepped into the buggy.

"Mr. Drury," she said, "you are a second Sir Walter Raleigh. You remember how he disdained mud when ladies were in question?"

Walter laughed, and said:

"I am delighted to have an opportunity to serve you."

Dr. Quelch bade farewell to the three, and his horse trotted off down the highway.

"Are you ready?" asked Walter.

"Yes, thank you very much," responded Dorothea.

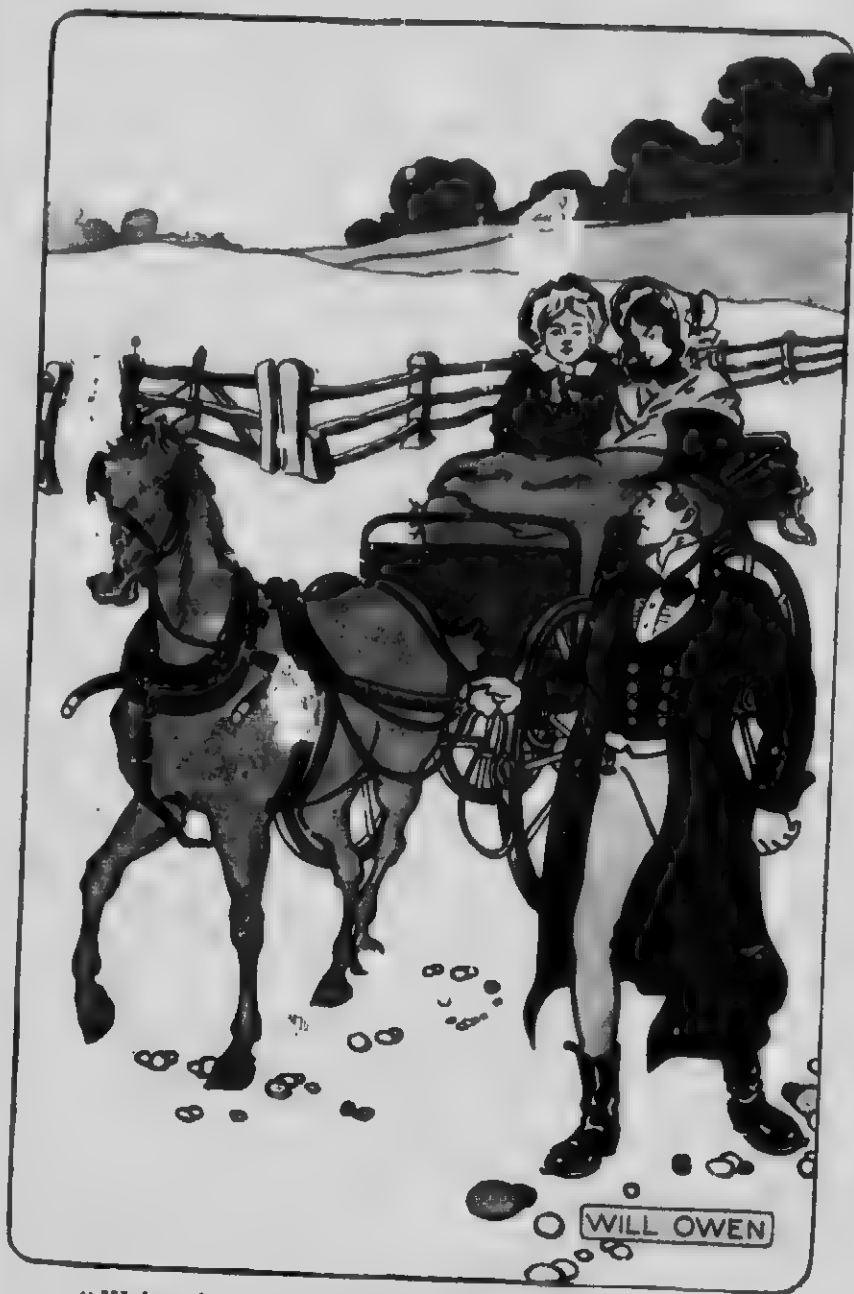
"You are so kind."

It was the first word she had spoken. He had heard that voice before. He recognized it at once. In his soul he was a little bit envious of Mrs. Burns. He wished she could have walked. Imagine him in the carriage actually by the side of this woman who for three days had almost driven every other subject from his mind!

The horse started out at a walk. Walter felt that for once the animal could hardly go slowly enough to please him. The driver kept close to the carriage, indifferent to puddles and to mud. Mrs. Burns talked with him at intervals, but Dorry did not speak again.

Two or three times when Walter turned his head to hearken to Mrs. Burns or to answer her, or in pretence that the buggy must be watched as well as the horse, he saw Dorry's eyes fastened upon him. She dropped her eyelids when he looked at her, but really she did not seem conscious that her gaze had been fixed upon him. She appeared like one who is in a deep reverie. He thought he had never seen such wonderful eyes or so sweet a face. He could not tell if he were really in her thoughts, or if she were thinking of the pain of her hurt foot, or if she were merely diffident with a stranger. But he was conscious of swelling joy in his soul which would pour out in a flood when he should be alone and without restraint. Now he must think of the horse, he must consider decorum, he must not manifest a trace of feeling, he must hide everything and pretend that he was just a dull fellow, plodding along in the mud for courtesy's sake.

The joy would have been transformed to rapture could he have perceived that the girl knew him as the youth she had seen in church, whom she had looked at from



"Walter felt that for once the animal could hardly go slow enough."

Captain Blunt

[Page 94]

the balcony, and peered at from behind the curtains on Sunday afternoon, and that, as she looked at him and thought of him, into her soul also came that strange feeling that, somehow, he belonged to her.

She did not consciously realize that she had this feeling. The consciousness came to her in the loneliness of her chamber when she had reached home. But now, at this very moment, as she saw the brave figure of the man in the roadway, and now and then watched his bright handsome face upturned towards hers, she did have some vague notion, amid the rush of new and bewildering sensations that perturbed her spirit, that the youth's destiny might be bound up with hers.

She had no impulse to speak. She almost feared to trust the strange impressions that were thrust upon her; she felt that if she should open her lips, even to utter some commonplace, she might betray herself.

The carriage reached the town and stopped before Mr. Hamilton's door.

"How did you know the house?" asked Mrs. Burns.

Walter coloured, as he answered:

"The name is upon the door."

But Dorothea guessed that the youth had had his attention strongly directed to the house on Sunday, and the thought was not displeasing to her.

Helping Mrs. Burns to dismount, Walter tied the horse to the hitching-post, and was about to ring the Hamilton door-bell, when John Hamilton came up. He had left the bank and returned home to luncheon.

Nodding to Walter, he asked Mrs. Burns:

"What is the matter?"

Mrs. Burns related the facts about the accident to Dorry, and added:

"And this young gentleman was so good as to put us both in his buggy, and to walk by the side of it as he drove us home."

Mrs. Burns very plainly thought him a very nice young gentleman indeed, and there was some room for suspicion that, if Mrs. Burns had been a very nice young woman, rather than a very nice woman of middle age,

she would not have been averse to a further and much closer acquaintance with Walter.

"Thank you," said Hamilton to Drury. "I am much indebted to you."

"Mr. Drury," said Mrs. Burns, "is Captain Bluitt's nephew."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mr. Hamilton, looking as if he did not feel very much interest in the fact. "My compliments to Captain Bluitt. You have been very kind."

In the effort to help Miss Hamilton to descend from the carriage, Walter stood upon one side of the step, and her father upon the other.

"I will carry you into the house, my dear," said Hamilton, "if you can manage to put your well foot on the step of the buggy."

Both men extended their hands, but as the hurt foot was upon the side towards Walter, the girl's weight fell chiefly upon him, when her arm below the elbow rested on his hands, and he fairly lifted her while her foot sought the step hidden by her skirt.

As that fair burden weighed upon him, Walter thought himself nearer to perfect bliss than he had ever before been able to come. Really perfect bliss would have been reached if he could have had the privilege of carrying her across the side-walk to the house.

As she touched the carriage-step, and just before she withdrew her arm from Walter's hand, she said to him, with the very sweetest smile he had ever seen, and the loveliest soft voice he had ever heard:

"And I thank you so much! You have been so kind! It will give me pleasure to have you call at our house."

As her father carried her into the house, followed by Mrs. Burns, who had bidden farewell to Walter, John Hamilton said to his daughter, with an air of slight vexation:

"It was hardly worth while, Dorry, I think, to propose to cultivate the boy's acquaintance."

CHAPTER VII

THE CURSE OF CANAAN

IT was Dr. Frobisher's wish that the congregation should prepare a fund of considerable dimensions before the return of the Hindu prince to Turley, so that it could be handed to him for transmission to his native land, where literally millions of pariahs, sitting in outer darkness, and involved in almost incredible degradation, awaited the regenerating influences of cash remittances from Turley and other American towns that basked in the warmth of a higher civilization.

With characteristic promptitude and vigour Mrs. Frobisher at once began the task of soliciting contributions to the Pariah fund, and the indications were fairly good that, if she continued to the end with the earnestness she manifested at the beginning, Bunder Poot would return to find a rich harvest from the sowing that he had done in his sermon on that famous Sunday evening.

Mrs. Frobisher made the cause of the pariahs her own. Disdaining to resort to fairs, and lantern-shows, and lectures, and bread-and-cake sales, and other devices commonly employed in behalf of the general effort to bring the precious truths of true religion to the consciousness of a lost and ruined race, Mrs. Frobisher resolved to obtain money by direct personal application to citizens of Turley whom she thought able to give, and to whom the unspeakable griefs of the pariahs would be likely to appeal with telling force.

CAPTAIN BLUITT

Captain Bluitt's good circumstances and known generosity induced her to present the matter first to him. And, besides, no doubt he had had visible evidence, while in India, of the horrors surrounding pariah existence, and would be willing, not only to give money to the great cause, but to bear witness that Bunder Poot Singh had employed no terms of exaggeration in depicting the misery in which these unfortunate people were involved.

One bright autumnal afternoon she started for her visit in company with her sister-in-law, Mrs. Metcalf, of Virginia, who was staying with her.

Mrs. Metcalf was one of the Doodys of Quilliponic, persons of highest quality, and believed by some to have in their veins blood that had swirled through the ventricles of kings—native American kings.

As the two women walked slowly down the street toward the river, it might have been observed that Mrs. Metcalf had what may be called, perhaps, the Talleyrand poise for her head; the chin slightly upturned, and the eyelids drooping.

This manner was thought to convey an intimation of a degree of haughtiness. It was cultivated by all the Metcalfs, excepting the very poorest of the poor relations. Mrs. Frobisher employed it, but with such diminished elevation of the chin as might be considered becoming in the wife of a clergyman, and her natural alertness made difficult the acquirement of the habit of drooping her eyelids.

Turning the corner, the visitors came to Captain Bluitt's gate, and, as Mrs. Frobisher lifted the latch, she said, in a subdued voice, to Mrs. Metcalf:

"You understand that these are quite plain people. A pastor's wife is not permitted to draw the social lines too sharply."

The two women crossed the little space between the garden gate and the house, and Mrs. Frobisher, taking the knocker in her hand, rapped sharply upon the front door.

A moment later Becky Slifer opened the door.

Mrs. Frobisher, presenting her card, had just begun to ask if Miss Bluitt and Captain Bluitt were at home, when Mrs. Metcalf, with some excitement, said :

"Why, Becky, is this you?"

It seemed not a necessary question, for there could be no doubt of any kind that this was Becky; but Mrs. Metcalf was so much surprised that she did not stop to frame her speech wisely; and for a moment she permitted her eyelids to rise to their full natural elevation.

There was, however, no expression of surprise, or indeed of emotion of any kind, upon Becky's part. Her countenance was impassive, and she looked precisely as if she had never before seen either Mrs. Metcalf or Mrs. Frobisher.

"Don't you know me, Becky?" asked Mrs. Metcalf, with some manifestation of indignation, as she looked into the stolid face of the black woman.

"Youse Miss Emmy, I s'pose," replied Becky.

"You know me very well. What are you doing here? I had no idea you were here."

"Ise earnin' my livin'," said Becky, indifferently, as if that fact might reasonably have been taken for granted.

"It was wicked for you to run away from me," said Mrs. Metcalf. "You had a good home, and you were well taken care of. Your bad conduct distressed us all very much. You will have to return to us, of course."

Becky looked as if return were very far from a matter of course; but before she could reply (if, indeed, she intended to reply) Mrs. Frobisher intervened:

"Don't you think we had better argue with her here? Let us speak with Miss Bluitt."

"Please give these cards to Miss Bluitt and Captain Bluitt," said Mrs. Frobisher to Becky, and the two women entered the house, while the negress closed the door.

Mrs. Metcalf was flushed and nervous as she dropped into a chair in the parlour, and she fanned herself vigorously.

"This is the girl, Mary, of whom I have so often spoken to you. I was perfectly amazed to find her

here. She ran away from me, as I told you, without the smallest provocation, and Mr. Metcalf searched everywhere for her. I never dreamed that she was living right near you, here in Turley. It is perfectly astonishing."

"I have never seen her until now," said Mrs. Frobisher.

"She must be taken back, at once," said Mrs. Metcalf, positively. "It isn't possible that these people will consent to give refuge to one of my runaway servants?"

"The incident is unfortunate and disagreeable," said Mrs. Frobisher, who felt that the great cause of the suffering pariahs had been suddenly thrust into the background; "but I think the Bluitts will desire to do right. Let us see."

Miss Bluitt entered the room, followed closely by her brother. They greeted the visitors very cordially.

The necessary preliminary references to the lovely condition of the weather were quickly made, but the time expended in making them seemed to the impatient Mrs. Metcalf rather unreasonably long.

"My sister," said Mrs. Frobisher, introducing the unpleasant subject, "was astonished to find in your servant who admitted us, a slave-woman of hers, brought up in her own house."

"Becky?" exclaimed the Bluitts, together.

"She ran away from me," said Mrs. Metcalf, unable to restrain herself any longer, "more than a year ago, and we could never find any trace of her, although we advertised and offered a large reward for her arrest. I was never more astonished in my life than when she opened your door just now. She was born upon our plantation, and I have known her ever since she was a child."

"She recognized you, of course?" said Captain Bluitt.

"Instantly," replied Mrs. Metcalf, "but she pretended at first not to know me. You had no idea that she was a slave?"

"No," said Miss Bluitt. "She came here seeking a place, and we gave her employment. I hesitated, for she had no references, but she has been an excellent servant."

"Trained in my own household," exclaimed Mrs. Metcalf, as if that were to say enough.

"We should be sorry to lose her," said Captain Bluitt, "but, of course if she is ——— What would you wish to have us do about it, ma'am?"

"She must go back with me, of course," said Mrs. Metcalf. "I shall dislike very much to subject you to inconvenience, and I am willing to grant some little time to Becky, but I cannot afford to lose a piece of property so valuable as she is."

"I fear she will not go with you willingly," said Captain Bluitt, with the air of a man who is quite certain about it.

"We shall compel her to go then!" exclaimed Mrs. Metcalf, with warmth.

"It really seems a pity, too," said Miss Bluitt, "to deal harshly with a girl who makes such perfectly lovely pone-muffins!"

"I taught her to make them!" said Mrs. Metcalf, almost fiercely.

"It is difficult to know exactly how to manage the matter," said Captain Bluitt. "We shall urge her to return to you, of course, but I am confident she will never do so unless force is used."

"I will use it," said Mrs. Metcalf. "The woman belongs to me."

"Certainly," said Miss Bluitt, "there can be no doubt about that; but if she should prove obstinate and——"

"If you will be so kind as to bring her here," said Mrs. Metcalf, "we might try persuasion first; I have always had great influence with her."

"Puella," said Captain Bluitt, "suppose you ask Becky to come into the parlour."

"One moment," remarked Mrs. Frobisher. "From what I observe of her manner, I am sure she will simply defy her mistress and her employers. We shall only make a scene. What would you think of asking my husband to come here with us to talk kindly with the woman? The fact that he is a clergyman may have some weight with her."

"I should much prefer religious influences to manacles," said Miss Bluitt.

"It is a good plan," said the captain.

"I am satisfied to try it," responded Mrs. Metcalf, "but she shall go without persuasion if persuasion will not avail."

"I trust," said Miss Bluitt, "there will be no violence or bloodshed in our kitchen. I am sure she will defend herself with the poker."

"Very well, then," said Mrs. Frobisher, rising, "I will speak to Dr. Frobisher about it. Miss Bluitt and Captain Bluitt, we came here to see you about another matter, but I will defer reference to it. When shall we come again to talk with the woman?"

"Why not at once, if that will be agreeable to Captain and Miss Bluitt?" said Mrs. Metcalf.

"This very afternoon, if you wish," remarked Miss Bluitt, "but please ask Dr. Frobisher to present the matter to her in as engaging a light as he can. Let him speak to her of the sweet influences of home."

"We will return to my house, and if the doctor is there, we will come back here at once," said Mrs. Frobisher.

Bidding farewell, the two women withdrew, and sped toward the Frobisher house.

Within an hour they knocked again upon Captain Bluitt's door, and were admitted by Becky Slifer.

Captain Bluitt led the way into the library, and seated the visitors. Then he summoned the negress, who came at his call, and quietly took the place assigned to her by the master of the house.

Dr. Frobisher sat in the arm-chair by the table, with a benevolent look, and the air of a man who knows he has an impregnable case, and has also large confidence in his power of persuasion. Mrs. Metcalf sat beside him, looking determined but anxious. Captain Bluitt and Puella were rather in the background as interested spectators, who had some sympathy with Becky, tempered by the conviction that the law was against her.

Becky stood by the window, her hands folded upon

her white apron. She wore a tidy blue frock of printed cotton, a red handkerchief about her neck, and a reddish plaid turban wrapped closely around her head. She was perfectly tranquil, as if she had no fear of any kind, as if her mind was fully made up; but her piercing black eyes had in them a look which contained no suggestion of humility.

Dr. Frobisher began the conversation with that tone of voice, mingling gentleness with authority, that he had been accustomed to employ when speaking to persons who had strayed from the paths of rectitude, and whom he would lead back again to the ways of righteousness.

"Rebecca," he said, "your good and kind mistress here desires that you should return with her to your home and your duty. You will do so, will you not?"

"Dis is my home, Mister F'obisher. I don't leave yer, onless Mister Bluitt and Miss Puella drives me out."

"But, Rebecca," said the doctor, "your mistress has claims on you that these good people have not."

"And I always was kind to you, Becky, and you know it, don't you?" interfered Mrs. Metcalf.

"Kin' enough," answered Becky; "but you says you owns me, Miss Emmy, an' I says you don't."

"You know that I do."

"No, you owns yourself, an' I owns myself, dat's de way it is."

"You forget the law, Rebecca," said Dr. Frobisher.

"The law of the land, the law of our country, makes you Mrs. Metcalf's property."

"De white folks make dat law. I doan' agree to it. Dey ain' anybody got a right to treat me like I was a cow or a piece o' ground."

"And not only the civil law, so to speak," continued the clergyman, "but the religious law—the law of God—supplies warrant for your kind mistress's claim. If you could read the Bible you would find in Genesis ix. 25—Stay, I will read it for you.

"25. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

"'26. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.

"'27. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.'

"Thus you see the heartless irreverence which Ham, the father of Canaan, displayed towards his eminent parent, whose piety had just saved him from the deluge, presented the immediate occasion of this remarkable prophecy. The Almighty, foreseeing the total degradation of the race of Ham, to which you belong. Rebecca, ordained them to slavery under the descendants of Shem and Japheth, doubtless because He judged it to be their fittest condition."

"I don't see dat Becky Slifer got any 'sponsibility for dat business."

"In another place," said the doctor, "we find that Abraham had three hundred and eighteen bond-servants in his house, and among them some 'bought with his money.' And so also Sarah, his wife, had an Egyptian slave, Hagar, who fled from her severity, and the angel of the Lord commanded the fugitive to return to her mistress and submit herself. See Genesis xvi. 9. The case exactly resembles yours, Rebecca, excepting that your mistress has never been severe."

"I dunno none o' dem folks. Ef de Gyptian woman went back widout being tuck, I got no 'pinion o' her good sense."

"Becky," observed the captain, feeling that he should say something on the law's side. "Apart from the Bible, slavery was universal in the Roman empire. Many slaves, in fact, were superior to their masters in intelligence."

"Was dem brack people, Mr. Bluitt?" asked Becky.

"Well, n-n-o, I think not, I'm not sure, but——"

"Werry well, den, ef de white folks want to be slaves, Ise willin' enough. I doan' make no 'bjection. I'm 'bjectin' to Becky Slifer."

"The Roman slaves were taken in war, and they were called *servi*," continued Captain Bluitt, intending to finish his interjectory remark.

"And, Rebecca," said Dr. Frobisher, "both in Exodus and Leviticus there is full Scriptural warrant for slavery. In fact, the children of Israel were instructed to make slaves of the heathen around them, and in Exodus xxi. 20 it is expressly declared that the slave 'is money'—that is property."

"Is dat 'ligion?" asked Becky.

"It was an arrangement expressly sanctioned by your Heavenly Father, and you fight against Him when you refuse to accept."

"Well, Mr. Frobisher, ef dat's religion, den Ise not 'ligious. Ise a pagan. Hoo-dooin' is better 'n dat."

Dr. Frobisher looked shocked and grieved.

"If you feel in that way, my good woman, it is hardly worth while for me to tell you that, in the New Testament, Paul expressly directed Onesimus, a runaway slave like you, to return to his master."

"Did he go?" asked Becky.

"Of course."

"But I won't!" said Becky.

"Becky!" exclaimed Mrs. Metcalf, "it is perfectly scandalous for you to speak in that manner to this distinguished clergyman. You needn't be so bold and saucy. We may be able to find a way to compel you to go back."

"I'll never go back alive," said Becky, "less I go down there a free woman to help odder black people to git free."

"You may find that the law is stronger than you are," said Mrs. Metcalf angrily.

"De law can't keep me from jumpin' into de river," said Becky.

"Did you ever hear such wild talk?" asked Mrs. Metcalf of Miss Puella. "Her mind must be disordered."

"No evidence of it appears in her muffins," answered Miss Bluit.

"I wish to point out to you further," said Dr. Frobisher, "that although there were hundreds of thousands of slaves in the world when our Saviour was here, He never

uttered one word of condemnation of the institution, not one!"

"Did He say slavery was right?" asked Becky. "Fo' ef He did, I doan' wan' to know Him."

"I am afraid, Rebecca," said the doctor, shaking his head sadly, "you are incorrigible. I had no idea that any one in this community had such wild and wrong notions. You cannot hope to go to heaven unless you have very different feelings from those you entertain now."

"Does de brack people go to the same heaven as de white folks?" asked Becky.

"I suppose they do; in fact, I may say positively that they do," replied the minister.

"Is dey free dere?"

"No doubt they are. There is nothing in the Scriptures to indicate anything to the contrary. Yes, all are free there; but this is not heaven, Rebecca. Here we groan and toil and suffer that we may reach that better place."

"Den it 'pears to me 's if God dor' wan' no slavery where He is," said Becky.

"Our knowledge of that holy place is obscure, my good woman. And besides, it is necessary that we obey the rules laid down for our guidance here. Our happiness in the hereafter depends upon our obedience to the commandments given for the direction of our conduct in this world, and your p. in duty, in this view, is to yield to your mistress."

Captain Bluitt's sympathy for Becky had been growing during the conversation, and her boldness increased his favour for her.

"Mrs. Metcalf and Dr. Frobisher," he said, "although it is a fact that slavery existed from the earliest ages, and was in operation in Rome so far back as the time when Tarquin was expelled, I can't say that I ever cared much for it. Anyhow, those times were different from these times, and I don't like the thing the way we have it. This woman here doesn't want to go back, and I am quite willing to have her stay here. It's a pity to

have any fuss about it, and perhaps to get up a big row in the town. I'll tell you what I'll do, Mrs. Metcalf; I'll buy your claim to Becky if you don't put it at too large a figure. What do you say?"

Before Mrs. Metcalf could respond, Becky sharply interrupted:

"Doan' you wase none o' yo' money a-buying me, Mr. Bluitt. I'm much 'bleeged fo' yo' kin'ness, but ef you'se feelin' generous, gimme de money, for I b'longs to myself."

Mrs. Metcalf's face was flushed with anger.

"How dare you speak in that insolent manner to Captain Bluitt, you bad woman? No!" she said, turning to the captain, "I will not sell her. I will bring her home again, and have her well whipped for her misconduct."

"That would be positively shocking," said Puella. "I should think it would make her completely indifferent to all the refining influences of home."

Becky did not show any feeling, either of anger or of fear. Perhaps there was a glimmer of disdain in her eyes as she said:

"Ise sorry to 'fend you, Miss Emmy, but I mus' answer when I'se spoken to; and Mr. F'obisher he won't say it's 'ligious to try to have me whipped."

"Yes, Rebecca," said the doctor, "yes, I will say it. Stripes not exceeding forty were appointed to offenders in Israel by divine authority, and our Master Himself used a scourge of small cords, when He drove the money-changers from the Temple. Your mistress has a human and a divine right to whip you, if you are in need of such punishment."

"The Roman master," said Captain Bluitt, "had the right to take the life of his slave."

"The man doan' live," said Becky, calmly, "dat dare lash my back. I'd kill him, sure."

"How perfectly dreadful!" exclaimed Dr. Frobisher. "No wonder you are indifferent to the plain teaching of Scripture, and the obligations of religion, if you are willing to redden your hands with the blood of your fellow-creatures."

"Dey fetched de blood when dey done lash my father," said Becky, quietly. "I seen it wid my own eyes."

"But no doubt he had done wrong. They did not kill him. You have threatened to commit murder," said the minister. "It is dreadful."

"Dey sol' him away from his wife an' chilluns, an' dat's wuss dan killin', Mister F'obisher."

"No, Rebecca, no," replied the clergyman, "not worse. The separation of families is indeed an unfortunate requirement of some of the exigencies that present themselves under the operation of this divinely-appointed institution. No doubt it is a part of the curse pronounced upon the descendants of Canaan, for we must remember that it was a curse, and not a blessing; but murder, of which you speak so lightly, is prohibited by the Ten Commandments. It is always a frightful crime."

"Does you wan' me to love God, Mr. F'obisher?" asked Becky.

"Why, my poor woman, that is necessarily my most earnest desire. Surely I do."

"You wants me to love Him because He cussed me?"

"Rebecca," said the doctor, with less positiveness of assurance in his tone than he had when he began, "we sinful, finite creatures, made with His hands, have no right to question the strange dispensations of His providence. His ways are not our ways. Our simple duty is humble submission to the plain declaration of His will. When in His inspired Word He declares, 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters,' we have but one thing to do—you have but one thing to do—to obey; you must obey your mistress."

"I doan' want to make no trouble," said Becky calmly, "nor to sass Miss Emmy, nor you, nor to 'fend Miss Bluit, and Mister Bluit, but when you ask me to love God who cussed me, an' de missis who whips me, Ise 'bleeged to say I can't, and I won't."

Miss Bluit really felt admiration for the woman. Her sympathies went out to her, and she was glad Becky was defiant, glad on Becky's account, and not sorry because of Becky's surpassing power with pone-muffins.

"It is useless," said Mrs. Metcalf, rising, "to debate with this perverse and wicked creature any longer. Let us go, Dr. Frobisher. Captain Bluitt, and Miss Bluitt, I thank you for your courtesy in permitting us to come here, and for the generous offer you, captain, have made to me."

"Becky, you can go," said Puella.

"I shall write to my husband," said Mrs. Metcalf, as the group passed from the room into the hall, "and advise with him what action we should take. No doubt Becky will remain here with you until I hear from him."

"Brother!" exclaimed Miss Bluitt, as the door closed upon the visitors; "brother, we can't let that cruel woman take Becky away. We *must* take her part."

"I know," said the captain, "that's just the way I feel. But the law sanctions slavery, and Becky is the property of Mrs. Frobisher's sister."

"But they were going to whip her," said Puella, with an expression of horror. "To whip any woman is bad enough, but to whip a good cook like Becky is mere barbarism."

"I fully agree with you," replied the captain. "A white woman who is willing to whip a black woman, or any other woman, must have a dislocation of her moral machinery. To say as the Latins did, that she is *brutum fulmen*, a brute and a fool, is to put the fact mildly."

"I shall advise her," said Puella, "to go to see Dr. Quelch, who has helped so many people of her kind. Possibly he may know what to advise."

"They may capture her on the road," suggested the captain.

"Then I will insist that she shall take the poker with her."

Captain Bluitt laughed.

"You don't mind a fight if it is not held in our kitchen."

"No, brother. You know very well that I want no fighting anywhere, but why should not I resist when somebody is going to beat me? Poking with a poker is no more wicked than whipping with a whip."

"Not a bit," said the captain. "I think I should really prefer it."

Miss Bluitt went to the kitchen, where Becky was tranquilly employed in her customary work, precisely as if she had never heard of Mrs. Metcalf and Dr. Frobisher.

"Becky," said Puella, "Captain Bluitt and I are dreadfully sorry for you; we do not want to lose you, with your faithful service and devoted earnestness, and the lovely way you have of making puddings and other nice desserts; but yet we hardly like to array ourselves openly against Mrs. Metcalf and the law."

"Doan' you min', Miss Puella," said Becky, turning her head to look at her employer. "I ken tak care o' dem. Dey doan' bodder me. Ise not a gwine back to no plantation. Ise gwine to stay right yer, ef you'll hev me."

"Have you? Why, Becky, I am more than willing to have you stay. You heard my brother offer to buy you?"

"If Miss Emmy 'd a tuk de money I'd runned away from you. She ain't got nuffin to sell. Hit's no use fo' Cap'n Bluitt frowin' his money away buyin' free niggers. Missy, yo' jes let yo' min' res' easy. Dey doan' tek me, min' dat."

"I thought, Becky, of advising you to go to see Dr. Quelch. He takes a great deal of interest in coloured people, and knows just what to do where there is trouble like this. Do go to see him."

"Ise a gwine out dere dis werry night, missy, ef you lemme go."

"Certainly, of course; go and have a good talk with him, but don't tell him we sympathize with you. You know I go to Dr. Frobisher's church, and it might make trouble."

"I sez nuffin, missy, nuffin at all. I doan' wan' no trouble. All I wants is dat dey lemme alone. Dat minister 'll do mo' good, Miss Puella, a-preachin' to white folks dan to coloured people. He ain' got no call to instruc' me."

CHAPTER VIII

FACE TO FACE

THERE were two happy, troubled people in Turley the afternoon of the day upon which Walter brought Dorothea home.

Dorothea, cared for by her mother and by Mrs. Burns, until all the kindly offices were done, sat in the easy-chair in her room, glad to have the door shut, and to be alone with the unfamiliar thoughts which thronged upon her mind.

How queer it was that among all the strangers in the church on Sunday she had been attracted by this man's appearance. He had not impressed her then, but something had impressed her when on Sunday afternoon he drove slowly past the house and looked at it. How eagerly he had looked at it. She remembered that now. Perhaps she had attracted him. But no, that seemed unlikely. And then, how strange it was that this youth, of all other possible passers-by, should have reached Graver's Point with a vacant seat in his carriage, and at the very instant when she needed such help! She laughed a little bit at Dr. Quelch's reference to the way things happen in story-books. Then she grew sober as she thought how often in real life within her own small experience things more strange than fiction had been observed, and in the sanctuary of her spirit, where worship was a familiar practice, she confessed that there is a loving Power who has ways mysterious and wonderful in dealing with His children.

As if she were almost afraid to permit herself in her very inner self to consider the thought, she did for a moment of pure happiness reflect that it might be the purpose of Him who guided her steps with tender care to bring this man's life somehow within the scope of her life, so that they might march together, hand in hand, upon the journey that lay before them.

She put the thought away, for it seemed almost unwomanly that she should thus consider one of whom she knew so little and who might not think of her again. And then it was absurd too, and perhaps it might bring sorrow. How dreadful that any girl should permit her feelings so to overmaster her that she should care for one who is careless of her.

"Yes, but he will think of me again," she said, for she could not compel her thoughts to run in another channel as she wished. She could not have given any reasons which would have looked reasonable, or proofs that would have proved, but she felt sure that the youth had not been indifferent when he saw her in church and when he looked at the house.

And, by the way, did he not betray himself when this very morning he drove directly to the house? He had learned that lesson well on Sunday, but why should he have cared to learn it, but for her sake?

Plainly Mrs. Burns had admired him as he tramped along there, the fine, handsome fellow, in the mud, for their sakes. She felt glad she was not so old as Mrs. Burns, and that Mrs. Burns was not so young as Dorry Hamilton, for then there might be reason for doubting.

But indeed, had he not smiled a good deal at the older woman, and talked more to her than to her companion? And had not many women of middle age married young men? She had a small pang of jealousy. Then she laughed again, and resolved to dismiss the whole subject. She would divert her mind with the book she had been reading yesterday.

It was deeply interesting then. She reached for it and opened it where the leaf was turned, and fell back in her chair for a good read.

But, fix her eyes on the page as she would, her mind would not remain there. The lines seemed dull and lifeless. Before she could fairly try to grasp the meaning of a paragraph, her thought had fled away to Graver's Point, to the journey along the muddy road, to the halt before their door, and always the figure of a manly fellow named Walter Drury was in the picture.

She remembered in what manner her arm had touched his as he helped her from the carriage. The pain of the twisted ankle vanished at just that moment. She wondered if he had cared for that single moment's experience? Of course not. It was a mere ordinary incident. How foolish for her to think about it. Foolish, yes. But she liked to continue to think about it.

She felt certain he would call to ask about her. Mere common politeness required so much. Perhaps he would call this evening. Her heart beat more quickly as this occurred to her mind. She was sure she could easily go down-stairs with a little bit of help. How foolish it would be to stay in her room perhaps for a week for such a slight hurt. She would insist upon going down for dinner, and this would divert suspicion. Once down-stairs, it would be unreasonable to think of going up until bedtime.

Which dress should she wear? Lucky Frobisher had always admired that white muslin gown. She thought, however, that his opinion was not very important. But her father also admired it and said it became her well. The evidence seemed to show that it might meet the requirements of masculine taste. She would wear it, and a flower upon her breast and another in her hair.

She stood up on one foot and held the arm of the chair while she looked at herself in the mirror. "It seems to me I have been pale lately," she said as she sank back upon the cushion. "A ribbon in my hair might be better than a flower. No, a flower will be better. Father said he liked it, and he is a man."

And so the hours went by swiftly as the young girl, forgetting her physical pain, careless of all the things and the thoughts that, only this time yesterday, seemed

so full of interest, suffused her soul with these emotions that had come to her so unexpectedly, bringing with them strange and wonderful and tremulous delight.

It is safe to say (but Dorry Hamilton would not have liked to admit it to herself) that Dorry Hamilton was in love.

And Walter Drury?

When Walter Drury seated himself in the buggy and drove down the street towards his uncle's stable, he was in a condition of mental intoxication. He felt as if he could hardly restrain himself from shouting. His feelings had been in severe repression ever since he started from Graver's Point with the precious load in his carriage, and now he would have liked to go off somewhere by himself and caper and roll and sing. He was so much engrossed with his happiness that he drove past the stable without seeing it, and he might have driven into the river had not Rufus Potter hailed him from Captain Bluitt's garden and asked him where he was going.

He turned the horse about, drove into the stable, and giving Rufus a silver coin (he felt very much like embracing Rufus, and whirling him around the carriage shed two or three times) he entered the house, and locking himself in his bedroom, permitted himself to give, in a subdued manner, expression to his feelings.

"Did any man," he asked, "ever have such amazing luck?" On Sunday his cause looked hopeless, almost absolutely hopeless. And here he was on Tuesday doing her a service, getting to know her, actually bringing her home, and helping her to dismount from the carriage, and getting an invitation to visit her. Why, if he had arranged it all himself, things couldn't have worked out better.

Visit her? Yes, indeed. He wouldn't leave this town until he had visited her. "I'll step in to-night, I think," he said. "It would be simply decent to do that. Her father seemed somewhat sour, and he may be disagreeable, but fathers are always that way with hovering young men. It is traditional. But it is the girl who counts, and that angelic girl seemed to like me, she

asked me to call as if she really wanted me to call, and call I will, father or no father."

There was a knock upon the door.

"Are you there, Walter?" asked his aunt.

"Yes," he said, forcing his voice to assume a placid tone, as if he were not at all excited.

He opened the door and admitted Miss Puella, to whom he related the adventures of the day with an air of some indifference, and then he said:

"I have a notion to stay over for a day, or two, if you will have me."

"Stay as long as you wish, my dear boy," replied his aunt affectionately, as she took her leave and went down-stairs.

Walter thought he would lie down for a while before luncheon. But he found that repose did not suit his mood. He arose and walked in the garden. After luncheon he wandered by the river-bank. He had a notion to walk up the street and to pass the Hamilton house, but that seemed to him perhaps inadvisable. He went down to the river-shore and pushed the boat into the stream and rowed for a little distance. Tiring of that, he came ashore and went to the stable and had a talk with Rufus Potter.

Rufus not proving to be a profitable companion for a youth in this particular frame of mind, Walter came back into the house, and began to prepare his clothing for the call in the evening. All that could be done in this particular matter was quickly done, and then Walter sat down to think what he should do next. Six or seven hours before he could decently make that call! Hours are very long sometimes.

Uncle Bluitt was to drive over to Donovan; but Walter did not care to go. He had just come from Donovan, and though his uncle usually was good company, and likely to be amusing, the young man felt that he really did not care for Roman reminiscences at just this juncture; and besides, he found no company quite so good as his own thoughts; that is to say, no available company.

Upon the whole, there could really be no harm in walking up the street past the house. He could walk fast, so as to appear to have some important errand, and he need not look at the house more than to glance at it. Nobody could tell that he had no errand at the other end of the town, and he needed exercise after sitting so long in the buggy and in the house.

So he turned into the street and proceeded at a rather brisk pace—not quite so brisk a pace as he had intended, toward the Hamilton house, and when he reached it the first glance told him that he might look at it as much as he wished, for all the blinds were down and nobody appeared upon the side porch or in the garden.

He pushed onward with an exultant feeling that he would enter that house to-night, and before his thoughts returned to more common things he found himself in front of the Presbyterian church. The door was open and he went in, having nothing better to do. He felt as if he would like to go up into the choir, and sit in the chair in which his fair singer had sat on Sunday.

As he came into the vestibule, he met Uncle Tarsel coming down from the tower.

The old man greeted him courteously, having pleasant remembrances of his generosity upon the occasion of his former visit.

"Looking after the bell, were you?" asked Walter, as the old man greeted him.

"No, suh, no! not ezzackly. No, suh; de bell hit's all right. No, jes a cleanin' up an' lookin' after things an' mebbe watchin' dem owls."

"Owls!" said Walter, "what owls?"

"Dem owls in de steeple, suh. T'ree ob dem. Dey rooses up yander, an' dey's quite sociable. I sorter fee's 's if I'se some kin to dem."

"To the owls?" exclaimed Walter.

"Yes, suh! Dey's bin free sex'ons in dish yer chu'ch, an' dere's free owls in dat steeple. Ef dey was jes owls dere'd be fo' owls er two owls; er ef dere was daddy an' mammy owl an' baby owl one'd be liddle; but dere's free ol' owls an' dey's all brown lek a nigger an' dey



" 'An' dey set an' look at me when I go up dere.' "

Captain Bluitt

[Page 117]

doan go to no 'piscopal steeple er Baptis' steeple, but stick right yer in de ol' place whar dey feels at home.

"An' dey set an' look at me when I go up dare, an' blink an' blink wid dare big eyes much's to say 'Ol' Tarsel, some day you'll quit a-ringin' dat big bell, lek we did, an' de fedders'll sprout, an' you'll come an' roos' up yer 'long wid us, an' blink at some odder coloured man.'

"Dey go out a-huntin' in de night jes lek de nigger go fur 'coons, same affer as befo' def; an' dere dey is ebery mawnin when chu'ch hol's, wukkin deir necks an' lookin' lek dey want to be shuttin' de windows an' pokin' de fu'nace an' scrimmagin' arour' to make de Sunn'y school boys behave.

"I dunno how dis jines wid de notion o' hebben. Mebbe dey's in de hebben part o' de time an' back yer part. Mebbe deys bein' punished for pickin' money outen de ahms-box en de westendbule, er fer hookin' Cap'n Bluitt's chickens. I dunno. Dey has angel's wings, anyways.

"I do know dis, when I'se called I'd lek to 'range to come hack yer oncet a year er so an' see de ol' place an' lissen to de pasture 'spoundin' de tex', an' yer de ol' bell a-tollin'; but fer de mos' part I wants to stay in de glory-lan' an' not come a-roosin' up yander en de dark, a-moanin' an' a-hootin' wid dem free odder niggers. No, suh!"

Walter laughed at the negro's story, and after walking about the church for a little space, and trying the seat in the choir, he strolled out again, down the street, past the Hamilton house, which still made no sign to him, and then home to wait with what patience he could for dinner and the visiting hour.

After all, the slowest hours do pass by, and when they are gone they really seem to have had some celerity of motion. And so the hour did strike when Walter thought he might call to ask about Miss Hamilton.

The night was dark, and the street lamps were not lustrous; but he knew the way, and in a few moments he found himself upon John Hamilton's steps, with his

hand on the bell-pull, and a feeling in his throat that appeared to require that he should exercise rather positive self-control, if his first utterance should not be marred by huskiness of his voice.

Miss Hamilton was in, and as the door closed behind him, and he placed his hat upon the rack, he could observe that several persons were in the parlour. Mr. Hamilton was there reading a newspaper, and on the other side of the table sat Mrs. Hamilton, sewing. Mrs. Burns was talking with her, and over on the sofa sat Miss Hamilton, while near to her was a young man, whom Walter, with a quick flash of jealousy, perceived to be the organist.

Mr. Hamilton rose and greeted the visitor politely but coldly. He introduced Walter to his wife, who was very gracious. Walter liked her at once. She resembled her daughter. Miss Hamilton smiled most sweetly as she welcomed him, and then she introduced him to her other visitor.

"This, Mr. Drury, is Mr. Frobisher, the son of our pastor."

While Mrs. Burns with manifest pleasure repeated to Mrs. Hamilton the story of Walter's walk by the buggy-side, and Mrs. Hamilton repeatedly said, "It was most kind," young Mr. Frobisher looked as if he really thought it was no such very great matter after all.

Mr. Frobisher was quite a fine young gentleman, upon the whole. If his intellectual qualities were not so very remarkable, they were quite equal to the merely ordinary demand of life, and his address and bearing were good. Being closely related to the Metcalfs of Aramingo, it was hardly possible that young Mr. Frobisher should not have almost, if not quite all the qualities of a gentleman. There was, in his bearing, perhaps, just a trace of that superciliousness—not much, a mere suggestion—which appeared in the demeanour of some of the Metcalfs; but young Mr. Frobisher was far too wise to offer any example of this quality in the conditions in which he was now placed.

In truth, he strongly admired Dorry Hamilton, and

would have made up his mind definitely to bring her into the charmed circle of the Metcalfs, but for two facts to which he could not be completely indifferent. One was that he had no other income than that from his position as organist, and this necessarily was small, with no comforting prospects of enlargement. The other, and far less formidable fact, was that his mother had not been able fully to reconcile herself to the union of the descendant of a proud and aristocratic race with the daughter of a bank cashier, who had only a salary and nothing to leave to his children.

Thus, under the restraints of prudent financial considerations and of an ambitious and far-sighted parent, young Frobisher had not permitted his warm feelings for Miss Hamilton to be blown into a flame; but he was keenly alive to the very great probability that some other youth, more fortunately conditioned, might not only kindle a fire in his own bosom, as he saw the lovely girl, but might start up something like a conflagration in hers.

Thus he proposed to himself to be very polite to Walter, lest anything short of perfect courtesy should shock Miss Hamilton, but also to refrain from any pretence that he regarded as heroic Walter's trifling sacrifice of his comfort and his shoe-blackening in the movement to bring the hurt girl to her home.

Walter tried to give the impression to the company, chiefly for papa's sake, that he had just dropped in as he was passing by to inquire about the invalid, as he might have done had she been a homely lady of fifty-five; but Florabella Burns had a quick eye in such matters, and Florabella Burns knew he wanted to stay, and made up her mind that he should stay.

The conversation for a while was general, Mrs. Burns exerting her trained powers to bring Walter into pleasant relations with Mr. Hamilton, who indeed softened considerably when he discovered that Walter's views upon the tariff-question not only coincided in a remarkable manner with his own, but were expressed in particularly forcible terms, and yet with such manifest respect for the

confessedly superior wisdom of the elder man as impelled Mr. Hamilton to regard him with some degree of favour. Mrs. Hamilton always smiled in a bright, intelligent, affectionate way when Walter happened to say a fine thing, but Walter was better pleased to observe, though with the manner of not particularly noticing it, that his most sympathetic listener was the girl upon the sofa.

Before long young Frobisher found himself involved in a somewhat warm controversy with Hamilton upon the subject of the remarkable movement of California gold to Europe. His views of the causes of this outward drift of treasure unfortunately did not agree with those of his host, and as it was perfectly apparent to the cashier that the organist had no real acquaintance with the subject, he was disposed to be impatient while he endeavoured to instruct his antagonist.

As the conversation proceeded, Mrs. Burns moved over to the sofa, and began some talk in which she involved Dorothea and Walter, and then she permitted them to talk together with small interruption from her.

Walter was at his best, and the girl thought it was the very best she had ever known.

Florabella Burns had some little thrills herself as she perceived in what manner these two creatures, in this their first real contact, glowed with the intensity of the sympathy kindled in their souls.

As they talked about the various subjects that thrust themselves forward to be talked about, and as all the girl's sweetness showed itself in the tenderness of her voice, the warmer colour in her face, and the bright utterances of a refined intellect stimulated by the best of all emotions, Florabella almost wished herself young again. And as Walter was inspired to put fervour into his speech, and to shape it to high things and to make it express his best impulses, Florabella thought of the day far gone when a young man had responded in such fashion to the passion in her soul, and she felt as if a sigh would best express her present feelings.

Dorothea's cup of joy seemed to her, as she sat there listening and responding, to be almost full. Not quite

full. If Mrs. Burns would talk to mamma while Lucky Frobisher wrestled with papa about the gold question; or, better still, if papa and mamma and Florabella and Lucky could drift off somewhere by themselves, there would be greater joyousness. No wonder she admired Walter when she first met him that morning. She now perceived that he was far above her highest expectations of his character and mental gifts. But she was conscious of something more than this. The strange impression that had come upon her mind before, that he belonged to her, was now deepened. There seemed to be something like certainty. She could no longer doubt that this youth was drawn to her. She saw it behind his bright eyes, she heard it behind the tones of his voice, it was evident in his whole manner to her.

She knew that her rapture would express itself, as soon as she had gone to her own room, in a good cry.

She had never before been so happy that she wished to weep, but she was sure she could not in any other manner relieve the stress upon her feelings.

Suddenly the thought came to Walter that he had made his visit much longer than he had intended. He disliked to go, but his judgment overmastered his inclination. He rose from his chair and began to express his intention, when Mrs. Burns said:

"Mr. Drury, if you could conveniently remain for a little longer time, I should regard it as a great favour to have you escort me to my home. It is not far away, but the streets are very dark."

Walter resumed his seat as he politely accepted Mrs. Burns's invitation. Thus early in the campaign he had acquired a half-conviction that Florabella's function in life had in it something akin to that of a guardian angel, and that she was performing the function in a remarkably effective manner. She seemed almost to be scattering blessings.

Dorothea was not sorry to have him stay, but she felt for a moment a return of that slight feeling of jealous suspicion she had had in the morning. Then

her good sense revealed to her the kindness of her friend's purpose, and she felt grateful.

As papa and young Frobisher ceased to grapple in their controversy concerning gold, and papa began to ask Mrs. Burns about the recent quarrel between high church and low church in her congregation, young Frobisher returned to Miss Hamilton, feeling that perhaps he had made a mistake in permitting his attention to be diverted, even for a time, to the exploration of fiscal mysteries. Walter addressed himself to Mrs. Hamilton, a small woman, who represented the loveliness that Dorothea would have when she should have grown old and had her hair turned to silver.

Walter was pleased by her quiet, gentle, refined manners. It was plain enough whence the daughter's charm had been derived. And she liked Walter. He was sure of that; and while he spoke to her of common things, through his mind ran a stream of thought about himself, and the burden of it was:

"If I win the daughter and the mother, I can afford to miss the father's approval; and the mother's clearly visible excellence is the guarantee and assurance that the daughter's charm is not superficial."

When at last Mrs. Burns rose to take her leave, Walter bade good-bye to Dorothea, who said, with a smile, but half timidly, as if she were almost afraid she might make her inner feeling manifest:

"It will give me much pleasure to have you come to see me again."

"I shall be in Turley but for a day or two longer. How much I should like to come again to-morrow! Or would that be too soon."

"I shall be compelled to remain at home," said Dorry, "and you will be very welcome if you call."

Then Mrs. Burns and Walter bade farewell to the others, and as Mr. Hamilton shook Walter's hand, he asked:

"Did you tell me what your occupation is, Mr. Drury?"

"I have been a commercial traveller," said Walter,

wishing very much that the question had not been asked, "but I am going to be a journalist."

"Hah!" ejaculated Hamilton. "Delightful profession, delightful." But he looked and felt as if really there was not much room for choice between organ-playing and newspaper-editing, when those occupations are regarded from the standpoint of the cashier of a financial institution.

As Walter came down the front steps of the house, Mrs. Burns put her arm in his, and the young man began to make observations about the weather. As Mrs. Burns did not at once reply, he asked her if she knew his Uncle Bluit. After a moment's silence, and while Walter was beginning to wonder what was the matter with the woman, Mrs. Burns asked:

"What do you think of her?"

Walter cleared his throat before he ventured to reply.

"You mean Miss Hamilton?" Then he cleared his throat again.

"Of course," said Mrs. Burns, with a slight laugh.

"O, I think she is fine!"

"She is just the dearest girl in the world. He will be a fortunate man who gets her."

"Mr. Frobisher perhaps has that idea?"

Mrs. Burns laughed again.

"Who can tell?" she said.

"I noticed her in church on Sunday," said Walter, "and thought she sang nicely. How odd it was that I should meet her and know her so soon afterwards!"

"Very odd! Fate, maybe."

Walter did not answer at once. Then he said:

"I do not know Turley very well, Mrs. Burns. Do you live anywhere near to uncle's house?"

"Yes, a block away."

"On the river-bank?"

"Yes; we are almost there. You must come to see me sometimes when you are in the town. Do you visit Turley very often?"

"No; only at rare intervals."

"But you will come oftener now?"

"I wish I could."

Silence. Walter felt as if he should very much like to have Mrs. Burns talk more about Dorothea, but he was shy about making any exhibition of his feelings. Mrs. Burns seemed to be considering. Then she said suddenly:

"She likes you very much!"

Florabella felt the little nervous tremor in Walter's arm as she uttered these words, and he had a strong impulse to blurt out the whole matter to this nice woman, but he simply said:

"I am most grateful. Do you think I might call there again to-morrow? Just—just to ask about her hurt foot?"

She did not directly answer.

They had reached the door of Mrs. Burns's house. She took his hand, thanked him for coming with her, asked him again to visit her, bade him good-bye, and said:

"Believe me, Walter, you are a most fortunate young man." Then she went into the house.

If Walter had not been in love with Dorothea Hamilton he would have been in love with Mrs. Burns. He felt almost as if Mrs. Burns had authority to speak for the younger woman, and had given him the one assurance that would crown his happiness.

The next day, as the afternoon drew towards evening, Walter, with high hope and eager expectation, walked up the street towards the house where Dorothea lived.

Before he reached the dwelling he saw her sitting in a wheel-chair upon the side porch where he had seen her on Sunday. She was looking out upon the flower-beds in the garden upon which the porch fronted, and she seemed not to see Walter until he came clear to the garden-gate; but he was sure he had not escaped her attention.

The young man stopped by the gate, touched his hat, and, placing his hand upon the latch, said:

"May I come in?"

"Yes," replied Dorothea with a smile.

He entered and came to the porch, which was covered with climbing roses upon the end towards the back of the garden, and upon part of the front.

The girl did not try to rise. She extended her hand to him, and pointing to a chair, she said :

"It was kind for you to call so soon again."

He felt as if he really deserved small praise for his philanthropy.

"And you are better?" he asked.

"Oh, yes! I shall walk in a day or two."

"I must go away to-morrow, I fear," he said sadly.

"But you will come to Turley sometimes, will you not? Your uncle and aunt——"

Walter felt like saying that the attractive powers of his uncle and aunt had never availed to draw him often towards Turley, but he answered :

"Of course I shall come whenever I can, now that I have here some other pleasant friends, Mrs. Burns and—you."

"It is strange I never met you before," said the girl. "I have known your relatives so long."

"I have not visited them often, and I never stayed more than a few hours at a time. It was mere chance that detained me here last Sunday, and I thought Turley dreadfully stupid; that is why I went to church."

"You were at our church, the Presbyterian church, weren't you?"

"Yes, I dropped in intending to stay only for a little while, and I remained to the end."

"You were interested, then?"

"Yes, indeed! Very much interested."

"The subject," said Dorothea, "is always an interesting one to me, and I was very much profited by the treatment of it."

"The subject?" demanded Walter. "You are referring to the——"

"To the doctor's sermon. You thought it fine?"

"It wouldn't be fair for me to say that," answered Walter, rather mournfully. "To be perfectly frank, I never heard a word of it."

"Dreadful," said Dorothea. "You were not asleep?"

"Oh, no!"

"No, for I saw you there, wide awake."

"You observed me there?" remarked Walter, very wide awake now, at any rate.

"Well, not particularly. I simply saw a stranger right opposite to me."

"He cared more for the singing than for anything else."

Dorothea's eyes dropped, and a tinge of colour came into her face.

"You like music, don't you?"

"Some kinds of music. The kind I heard on Sunday. After service I remained and looked at the church. I was there again yesterday, and went over and sat in one of the choir seats."

Dorothea laughed gently, and then asked:

"Are you a musician?"

"Oh, well, just a half-musician. I know something about music. Not very much. But I actually was a music-teacher once."

"And only a half-musician?"

"When I say I taught music once, I mean strictly once—that is, one time."

"I don't quite understand."

"May I tell you about it?"

"Yes, indeed!"

"Why, you know that Uncle Bluit, who had few chances to learn in his youth, is now quite eager to obtain knowledge. He said to me one day, a year or two ago, that he wished he could have at least enough acquaintance with music to permit him to read it, and I offered to teach him the rudiments."

"Well, he accepted, and we went to the piano and he sat upon the stool like a good pupil. I struck one of the notes with my finger and said, 'Uncle, that is C.' He looked at it closely and said: 'Why don't you begin at the beginning, with A?' I explained to him that it is necessary to start with C, and that as I knew about it and he didn't, he must trust me. To this he agreed."

"So we started again. 'This is C, is it?' he asked, striking the key with his finger. 'Yes, C,' I answered. He looked hard at it, struck it again two or three times, and asked, 'Why is it C?' 'That is of no importance,' I said, 'let us just accept the fact that it is C.' 'But there must be some reason for calling it C,' he insisted. 'There is none that I know of,' I answered. 'Well, but, Walter, he said, 'there are twenty-six letters in the alphabet, and they go to work and pick out one of them, C, for this key; now, why not have called it R or M? People don't usually act without motives.'"

Dorothea laughed heartily at the narrative.

"'Well,' I said, 'all I know about the matter is that C was picked out as the name for this key, just as Elijah was picked out for your name.' 'Then you admit that you can't explain the fact?' he asked. 'No, I can't explain it.' 'Can your aunt Puella explain it?' 'I don't believe she can,' I answered. 'Well, my son,' he said, 'I am not willing to go on until I have it explained.' Then he shut the piano, wheeled around on the stool, and we went into the library to smoke. That educational movement stopped right there, suddenly; with a jerk, as it were."

"The dear old captain," said Dorothea, who had been much amused by the story. "What a pity he couldn't have had better opportunities when he was young."

"I don't care much for teaching," said Walter seriously, and then he joined in the hearty laugh with which Dorothea greeted the remark.

"You will do better as a writer. I heard you tell father you would be a journalist."

Then Walter, with joyous conviction that he had a sympathetic listener, related to the girl, who heard him with plainly apparent interest, the story of his past failures, and of his high hopes and expectations with respect to his future.

"I know you will succeed," she said earnestly, "and I shall watch your career with interest."

"That," said Walter, boldly, "will be a very strong

incentive to diligent effort. I shall try to win your approval."

"Aren't the flowers lovely?" said Dorothea, with an impulse to change the subject of conversation.

"Lovely! Shall I gather some for you?"

"Yes, please do. I wish I could help to pick them."

"May I wheel you out upon the path among them?" asked Walter, eagerly.

"It would be a great deal of trouble."

Walter took hold of the chair and dexterously dropped it step by step to the level of the garden. Then he pushed it out among the shrubs and flowering plants. He was conscious that he had never been so happy before in his life. The situation seemed so delightful that he could not bear to think that it should ever end. How fortunate that papa had found duty strongly urging him to keep away from home that afternoon! He should be angry even with Florabella Burns if she should be so misguided as to call just now.

Moving about from place to place, he pulled the flowers and gave them to her. She held some in her hand and some in her lap; but one sweet flower, red as the sunset, she placed upon the bosom of her dress. He looked at her, with her modest white costume, her soft brown hair, her gentle eyes of blue, and at the features in which all the graces were represented, and he loved her with a passion so strong that he felt any sacrifice he was capable of, a small thing to offer if he could win her love.

"You are fond of flowers, aren't you?" she asked.

"Yes, but I really care for only one."

She looked at him with surprise upon her face.

"Which one?" she said.

"That one upon your dress," he said, pointing to it.

"Won't you give it to me?"

Only for an instant she hesitated, and then she said softly, "Yes," and she offered it to him.

He made as if he would breathe its fragrance, but she thought as he held it to his face his lips touched it,

and the blood surged into her cheeks ; but she was not displeased.

"Shall we return to the porch?" she asked.

Walter brought her chair again to the place where it had been.

"I wish you could sing for me," he said.

"Not here!" she answered.

"No, and it will not be well for you to try to move from the chair to the piano-stool. But it would give me such pleasure to hear you again."

"Some other time," she said.

"And I may come again?"

"Oh, yes!" she answered, with a little laugh and a glance at him, "if you care to do so. You will always be welcome."

"And if I can't come very often, may I write to you sometimes?"

She looked away for a moment, and then turning her face towards him, said:

"If father and mother were willing, I am sure I should be glad to hear from you how you like your new profession, and how you are getting on."

"You will ask your mother, won't you?" said Walter, warmly. "I will write to you, and you may show the letter to her and beg her to let you answer."

"Yes, I will do that."

"I will write very seriously," said Walter, "so that she will think me a safe and wise counsellor for you."

"But not too seriously," said Dorothea, smiling. "I am not averse to a bit of fun."

"Don't be afraid of me in that particular," responded Walter. "I am more likely to err in the other direction. Life would hardly be endurable without some good humour."

"Surely life has not yet been very hard for you?"

"No, I suppose not. But I can see plainly that it is upon the whole, for the mass of men, tragical; but, fortunately, a beneficent Creator has permitted us to see and enjoy the comedy side of it."

"Pure, honest fun, I think," said Dorothea, "is one of the most innocent and delightful and helpful things in the world."

"Yes, even downright foolery has its uses. How a baby likes to laugh!"

"The sweetest and purest being in the world," added the girl. "It has a natural passion for fun."

"Don't you suppose there will be fun in heaven?" asked Walter.

Dorothea suddenly became very serious.

"Why, I never thought of that. Do you believe it?"

"Why not?"

"We always think of heaven with a kind of solemn awe. Somehow the idea of laughter there jars our feelings a little bit."

"But if the innocent baby likes to laugh, why should not the sinless angels be joyous with laughter? There is no more crying or pain in heaven."

"No tears," added Dorothea solemnly. "God has wiped them all away."

"And so, if there is singing for joy, why not laughter for joy? Yes, I really believe we shall have fun there. There must be compensation for all the sadness of this sad life."

Dorothea smiled, but did not answer, excepting to say:

"Perhaps it is so."

And so they sat and talked about things earthly and heavenly, while all the earthly things seemed heavenly to both of them, and the sun moved toward the horizon, and the shadows grew long, and he put off from moment to moment the task of saying good-bye, until at last Mrs. Hamilton came to the door and, greeting Walter pleasantly, said to her daughter:

"Shouldn't you come in now, dear, before the twilight? You are thinly dressed."

"Yes, mother," she answered.

"May I put your chair into the house?" asked Walter.

"If you will be so kind."

He wheeled her into the parlour and placed her by the window that looked upon the street. Then he offered her his hand, and she took it, and he said:

"I thank you very, very much, for the most delightful afternoon I have ever had. And now good-bye."

"Good-bye," she said, and he felt as if he should like to kiss that lovely hand.

He went out by the front door, and as he passed the window she looked for him, and as he touched his hat she smiled upon him, and he knew that she too had had delight.

He walked homeward a proud and happy man, saying to himself again and again, as if the words were freighted full of bliss:—"She loves me! Yes, she loves me!"

CHAPTER IX

TWO MEN OF TURLEY

OF Doctor Thomas Quelch the finest thing that can be said is that in his early manhood he discovered the secret of all high and noble living—unselfishness, and all through his long life, now extended nearly to four-score years, he had shaped his character and his conduct upon that principle. He was loved and honoured wherever he was known, and he was widely known.

He was a country physician, with a practice actually covering an area of twenty square miles in which were many towns and villages, and there were hundreds of homes within that area to which he came now and then as the most welcome visitor. The domestic secrets that he knew, the sorrows, the pleasures, the crimes, the things kept hidden even from neighbours and friends, would have supplied material for a wonderful history of life in that region. There were families who looked upon him as the good physician, of singular skill, who had more than once baulked the assaults of death upon their dear ones; others knew him as the kind consoler in sorrow, the wise counsellor in difficulty, the generous helper in distress, the faithful champion against the attacks of human enemies.

He owned more than one mortgage which had never drawn interest in his hands, but which he had bought to save foreclosure; he had shown scores of young men the way of peace and of honour; he had brought harmony to many a household in which discord had threatened to end with disruption and disgrace; he

had given his professional services more frequently for nothing than for money; he had been the wise arbiter in many a contention between employer and employed; he had shielded sinning men from exposure and disgrace that they might have another chance to retain their foothold in society, and more than one sinning woman was brought back to self-respect and to hope and to a better life, because he could pardon human weakness, and give pity and help where the less kindly might have found reason only for reproof and repulsion.

In the large world, beyond the region in which he did his daily work, his name was not without shining fame. He was one of the masters of the science which he practised, and no doubt had he preferred to conduct his operations in the great cities, and to thrust himself more strenuously upon public attention, he would have been known everywhere as a great physician. But he was a ready and frequent writer, and his papers upon professional subjects were familiar to readers of the medical journals, and always were pregnant with scientific knowledge and with sound sense—sound sense, the most valuable of all intellectual qualities, if indeed it be not also a moral quality. He was ardent in controversy, but always with refined courtesy. It was his rule never to write an angry word, and it was his habit to put his most vigorous assertions, if it were possible, into the form of an inquiry. He had fought many battles, and often he had won, but never without also winning the respect and esteem of his antagonist; and sometimes when it came to pass that in the judgment of his opponents it seemed that he had been driven from the field, he had found that by waiting patiently time had given him the victory.

Victory was never greeted by him with expressions of exultation, but with reserve and humility that impelled him who had been upon the wrong side to seek to be among the first to acknowledge the error. Long before other physicians were able to perceive that cold water could bring anything but hurt to fevered patients, his practice had been to permit the sufferer to drink cold water at will, and to his clear vision and fearless resolution

in this and in other matters, wherein the notions of the times were at variance with his own theories, persons all about the region in which he operated owed not only diminution of bodily misery, but their triumph over disease.

It was he who, early in the century, became one of the foremost and most vigorous of the champions of the right of women to enter the medical profession, and to practise medicine upon a footing of perfect equality with men. It had been almost a life-long struggle with him. Derision and denunciation met all his efforts at first, and it seemed for a time as if the young man might even jeopard his own right to just consideration from the members of his guild. But he was fearless, dauntless, persistent, able, resolute. His arguments could not be answered, because there is no argument in reason against the woman-physician; his energy could not be baffled; his boldness could not be tamed; his earnestness of purpose could not be diminished, as year after year he returned in the medical societies to the contention which he conducted without cessation in the press.

He dared the societies to disown him when he ventured to meet the woman-physician in consultation, and his challenge was never accepted. He took women students into his own office until he found at last the way to organize a college for them; and so, as his life drew to an end, he rejoiced to see the ancient prejudice fading away, to find an increasing number of the better and wiser men in the profession rallying to his side, and to cherish the reasonable hope and expectation that, not long after his labours were over, the woman's superior fitness to the man for medical treatment of women might have full recognition from the doctors, and, better still, from society.

While he fought this good fight with heroic ardour and unrelenting vigour, he was not less vehement and insistent as the opponent of human slavery. He could not remember when he had not hated that institution. His imperative instinct was against it from his earliest years; and as age gave him large knowledge of the

practices of slavery, and clearer perception of its iniquity, his hatred was intensified, and hatred with him always meant attack and warfare to the end. He saw plainly the fact, hidden from so many other good men, that no human being can have any right given to him by man's law to ownership of another human being; and so he became one of the most eager and active of the foes of slavery at a time when the general public opinion of the country regarded an abolitionist as a being who combined the most absurd eccentricity with the dangerous qualities of the man who has neither true patriotism nor respect for the sacredness of the rights of property.

As was his practice always, Dr. Quelch spoke fearlessly and often in the press and on the platform in behalf of his cause, and at the polls he always cast his vote as he thought would best thrust that cause forward toward the conclusion desired by him.

But he did more. He was one of the first to lend a hand in the efforts that were made to encourage the slaves to seek liberty in flight. Long years after he had begun to show black fugitives the way to freedom, the process which he helped to arrange was named the Underground Railroad. His premises not far from the town of Turley represented a station upon the line. His money found its way into the south, with other money, in trusty hands, and when slavery was overthrown, and he had found rest from all his toil, his children had memories of mysterious noises about his grounds at night; of rumbling vehicles, and moving lights, and smothered talk; and of the preparation of food in the kitchen at late hours—food that had vanished when morning came.

Dr. Quelch kept his counsel from the children who might have talked carelessly. Negroes would be brought to him after dark; he would house them in one of his buildings, and comfort and clothe and feed them, and then hurry them onward to a distant point before dawn, to some other place still nearer to the north star, to freedom, to manhood, to hope and to self-respect. Or, if the pursuit were not too eager, he would retain

the hunted men, women and children for a day or two, that they might have rest and healing while they lay shut in from all curious eyes, and while the way was made ready for speeding them upon their journey.

When Dr. Quelch lay dying, this was the work of his well-spent life that filled him with happiest thoughts. This was the duty that would have seemed to him to have earned for him the right to the commendation "Well done, good and faithful servant," if his humility had not far overborne any conception that he might have formed that duty done supplies any basis for a claim to reward or to honour.

When we first meet him in this tale, there were few persons in the region about Turley, no matter how many their years, who could remember when his face and figure had not been familiar to them. Out of doors he always wore a high silk hat, conformed to no remembered fashion, rusty, dusty, crumpled, and dilapidated. There was a common belief that it had been new during President Jackson's first administration, but its appearance offered evidence in behalf of the theory that it had been constructed much earlier in the century. He seemed to have but one hat, and rather fondly to cherish it; although the precise ground of his affection was a secret locked in his own bosom.

He drove about upon the high-roads in a buggy which looked as if it had never been washed, but which, despite its discouraging appearance, seemed so strong and serviceable, that some persons, fond of considering such matters, advanced the opinion that Dr. Quelch had discovered the secret of perpetual youth and had imparted it to his buggy. No one could remember when that buggy had rolled along the turnpike without following a whitish-grey horse, covered all over with brownish spots, and with an undocked tail upon which the hair was sparse. The horse also seemed to have learned never to grow old, and the manner in which he moved right along at a brisk trot without urging, for the doctor never used a whip, might have conveyed the idea to the observer that the horse was still young, had it not been

that nobody ever saw the animal shy or bolt, or engage in friskiness of any kind.

Beneath the battered hat and the shaggy grey hair of Dr. Quelch was a face covered with grey beard, at a time when beards were rarely worn, and through his silver-rimmed spectacles beamed a pair of grey eyes, kindly, bright, piercing, shrewd, which no one could look into without feeling himself in the presence of a man of power, of high thought, of pure heart, of tender feeling.

Never had Dr. Quelch made an approach to wealth. He earned much, but his gifts followed too sharply upon his earnings to permit large accumulation. He thought within himself that he should be ashamed to be rich, even by his own effort, and for the dollar that came by any other method his feeling was not of scorn but of horror.

A wealthy unmarried woman, for whom he had been physician for many years, told him before her death that she should make him her sole heir. He protested against this action, and thought no more about it. But when she died it was found that she had made her promise good. Dr. Quelch refused to accept the inheritance, and it was distributed among her relatives, as he said it should have been.

This was the kind of unselfishness which common men could value, if they did not understand it. Even to the man who considered such conduct as a manifestation of an intellect that was hardly orderly, there came, as he thought of it, faint glimmer of the fact that there might be heights of character so lofty that his eye could not wholly perceive them.

And so this man through all his long life had gone in and out among the people, ministering to their bodies, comforting their souls, and better still, showing to them in his own person how high and noble and beautiful a human soul may be.

Dr. Quelch was a religious man, of course, but he belonged to no church. Perhaps if his inner thought could have been known he would have been perceived to have preference for the gentle and beautiful system of the Society of Friends. But, without denying that the

great cause can have most effective force given to it through the instrumentality of organization, Dr. Quelch had always felt that he could not with comfort and peace put upon him the obligation of any formula prepared by a religious society, nor pledge himself always to believe just as other men believed. How could he tell, he had reflected, in what manner time and observation and experience would compel him to change or modify his beliefs? And so for himself, he thought it wise to stand apart; or rather, to recognize all believers as his brethren, and in his own way, by the impulse supplied by his example, by the light shed from his own high life, to influence those about him to strive for better things in their own lives.

When Becky Slifer reached Dr. Quelch's house, early in the evening of the day of her talk with Dr. Frobisher, Dr. Quelch was sitting with a lighted lamp in his little office upon the lawn, near by the dwelling-house. The doctor was writing.

The office-floor was covered with well-worn furniture, with piles of books and pamphlets, and with geological specimens representing the formations of the region all about Turley. Around the walls were bookcases full to overflowing, and in an adjoining room were a sofa and appliances for operating upon patients.

When Becky, after knocking upon the door of the office, went in, she courtesied to the physician, and permitted a kindly look to come upon her fierce countenance.

She knew the reputation of this man as the friend of the enslaved members of her race. She would have worshipped him, or given her life for him, if she had been called to perform the one act or the other.

Dr. Quelch greeted her politely, and asking her to sit down, leaned back in his chair.

"I'se Becky Slifer, Dr. Quelch."

"Becky Slifer! Well, Becky, what's the matter?"

"I'se bin a livin' in Mister Bluit's house dese eight month or mo', an' now Miss Emmy, dat sez she owns me, is affer me."



"Becky curtsied to the physician."

Captain Blufft

[Page 138]



TWO MEN OF TURLEY

139

"Ran away from her, did you?"

"Yes, suh, Miss Emmy Metcalf, down yer in de Aramingo country."

"Is she related to Mrs. Frobisher?"

The doctor had heard much about the Metcalfs from Mrs. Frobisher.

"Miss Emmy, she's married to de brudder of Miss Frobisher."

"And you ran away?"

"Yes, suh. I won't be de slave o' no man or woman, an' Miss Emmy she come to de house dis mawnin' wid de minister an' dey rastle an' rastle wid me a-sayin' dem things from de Bible, an' when I declar' dat I sooner die dan go back, den Miss Emmy she get mad an' say she make me go. But she won't. Ef I can't own myself, den I'se a gwine to quit livin'."

"You are afraid she will have you arrested?"

"Yes, suh. I'se not much 'fraid; but I doan' wan' no trouble, an' Miss Puella, she vised me to come and see you."

"Hah!" said the doctor, reflecting on the situation.

After a moment's pause he said:

"Very well, Becky. You want to stay with Miss Bluitt, I suppose?"

"Yes, suh, I'se gwine to stay right dare!"

"That is right. If there is any trouble I will help you. If you find that they are going to arrest you, come at once to my house. If they do seize you, get away if you can. If you can't, have Rufus or some other person come for me as quickly as possible."

"You're werry kind, suh. I'll let you know, sure."

Becky rose to take her leave.

"One moment," said the doctor, as he turned & thought over in his mind. "I think you might say to Captain Bluitt that I will run over to see him about ten o'clock to-morrow morning. I don't want to meddle with anybody in his household without speaking to him."

Becky opened the door and withdrew.

"She looks to me," said the doctor to himself, "like a woman who could do good service on the Underground Railroad. I will ask the captain about her."

When Dr. Quelch reached the Bluitt mansion on the following morning, he found the captain and his sister awaiting him, but all ready to go out.

After greeting him cordially, Captain Bluitt said to the doctor:

"Puella and I have been invited to go over this morning to McGann's to see his new wonderful electric motor, and we have promised to go. Won't you go along?"

Captain Bluitt smiled, as if to convey the impression that his faith in the McGann motor was not of the strongest kind.

"Electric motor, is it, that he has now?" said the doctor. "The last time I heard from him it was a submarine boat."

"Yes," replied the captain, "but didn't you know that the boat dived automatically over there off Graver's Point, and never came up again?"

"No," replied the physician. "I hadn't heard of it. Poor man! I hope he will have better luck with this new invention."

"He is a very, very good man, I think," said Puella, "even if he is unfortunate. Perhaps the boat will come up somewhere far out at sea, at the Azores, or in the Gulf Stream."

"Yes, he is a good man," said Dr. Quelch, "but not completely a wise man. I should like to go over with you to see the motor, but I called to ask you about your servant, Becky. She came to my house last night, and asked me to help her to escape being carried back into slavery."

"I advised her to go and see you," said Puella. "She is a first-rate servant, perfectly harmless, and with really a great gift for waffles and clear-starching; and yet Mrs. Metcalf actually threatened to whip her."

"I want to say, doctor," remarked Captain Bluitt, "that while I don't wish to encourage runaway slaves, we like this girl, and I shouldn't be sorry to have her kept from being forced to go back to the place and the thing she hates. If you can help her you have my approval,

and she can stay here or go with you, whichever way is best for her or will suit your plans. She is as smart as a lawyer. Dr. Frobisher had as much as he could do to hold his own in an argument with her yesterday. She is a remarkable woman, Becky is."

"Very well," said the doctor. "It will be better to have her remain in your house until a movement is made to take her. Perhaps they will let her alone after all."

The three then left the house, and walked up the street, and around the corner beyond the Presbyterian church, to the place where McGann lived, on the border of the town, on the road that led away to the hills that filled the western horizon.

Irwin McGann had had such variety of occupation as seems to come only to Americans. In his youth he had been a school-teacher, but his good-nature and his invincible propensity to permit his mind to drift off into dream-land while the boys were reciting their lessons, brought to an early and ignominious end his career as a pedagogue; and he then borrowed some money and started a grocery-store in Turley. He had no acquaintance with the right methods of conducting that business or any other business; and so, when he had sold goods upon credit to every family in the neighbourhood that was unworthy of credit, and had lost his money and that of the wholesale dealers from whom he had bought supplies upon long time, he withdrew from the pursuits of commerce, and began to publish a newspaper, *The Turley Weekly Herald*, which after endeavouring for six months, without any perceptible indications of success, to reform the human race, was sold out by the sheriff to satisfy the claim of a paper-mill.

Mr. McGann then became a surveyor, and for three years engaged in the work of laying boundary lines in and around Turley with such amiable and well-meaning disregard of the accuracy of angles and base-lines, as threw the property into disorder from which ten years of expert effort and four law-suits hardly succeeded in disentangling it.

But everybody, except the property-owners and the wholesale grocers, felt sorry for McGann—he was such an innocent old lamb of a fellow, with no malice in his heart for anybody, with such clearly demonstrated inability to take care of himself; and so the Turley Whigs took him up as their candidate for justice of the peace. He was elected by an almost unanimous vote, and entered upon his duties apparently with the conviction that mercy is much more useful than justice, as he certainly thought it much more agreeable; so he could never find it in his heart to inflict a penalty upon any offender brought into his court, if the justice's ingenuity could discover a method by which the prisoner could be permitted to escape.

Every vagabond who lived in Turley or happened to stray into Turley thought Judge McGann the most delightful justice of the peace in the state; and many of them were indebted to him for small loans representing important fragments of a very small salary. For a man who was expecting to have a fine imposed upon him, or to be sent to prison, it was like making a trip into Fairy-Land to have the justice look down with pitying eye on the rascal's tatters and incrustations, and to have the magistrate call him up to the seat of justice and hand him a dollar-bill and say to him: "Go and sin no more!"

The judicial career of McGann concluded when war was declared against Mexico. He began at once to raise a company, which elected him captain, and his friends made up a fund which equipped him with a handsome uniform and a beautiful sword.

The judge never could maintain discipline in his command, but, somehow or other, he led it bravely into the fight at Chapultepec, and he came home crowned with glory and with four months' pay in his pocket.

The entire tramp population of the county wanted to have him made justice again, but the rest of the people preferred that he should seek some occupation in which good-nature would have less harmful consequences.

After thinking the matter over the judge concluded that he had a call to preach the Gospel, and so he

applied to the authorities of the Presbyterian Church for permission to enter a theological seminary and study for the ministry. The authorities, when they had patiently examined the matter, reached the conclusion that the judge must have mistaken some other kind of spiritual vocalization for a "call." They were perfectly clear that the pulpit could profitably do without him. Upon further contemplation of the subject, the judge frankly admitted that he must have been mistaken, and dropping on Tuesday all thought of going into the ministry, he began work on a perpetual motion machine on Wednesday.

Since that time all his powers had been dedicated to the great work of invention.

At the back of his garden-plot McGann had a workshop which he called his studio. It was a small frame building, one story high. Here he spent his time, excepting when he was out in the garden, experimenting with some machine for which he required space, or was engaged in organizing companies.

Beneath a shed adjoining the studio, he had a boiler with a fire-chamber under it. This supplied steam to a small horizontal engine within the studio.

This boiler was an object of interest to the people of the neighbourhood; and perhaps that is a mild statement of the fact. Nobody knew how old it was. It had belonged to a saw-mill before it was employed in the tannery where Judge McGann had bought it for a low price at an auction when the tannery went into the hands of a receiver. It had no safety-valve, and while there was a glass water-gauge, no water had appeared in it for several years.

McGann often filled the boiler in the morning, turned on steam, banked the fire, and let the engine run along for hours, while he was absent. Persons who lived near by felt that it might at any moment go whirling through the air. Some timid people moved further into town, because of the judge's boiler, and rents in the vicinity of it had a marked downward tendency.

When the judge was remonstrated with about it, he always said:

"That boiler! Why, man alive, that is the safest boiler in the state! You can't generate steam enough to explode that boiler."

And really there appeared to be some solid ground for this confidence. The judge's steam-plant, as he called it, had long engaged the curious interest of men who were familiar with steam-practice.

The engineer over at the shoe factory in the Third Ward said that if McGann's boiler had been employed in a mill of any importance, where an explosion would damage property and destroy life, it would have been blown into scrap-iron years ago. His view was that it was simply waiting for a good chance.

Another expert, the mechanical engineer of the rolling mill down at Donovan, said that McGann's boiler had so completely undermined the ordinary theories about steam boilers that all his convictions, based upon lifelong practice, were shaken, and he was prepared to believe anything—even that there was in it an element of the supernatural.

There was a boiler-insurance and inspection company up in the city that, out of mere curiosity, sent one of its most competent inspectors down to Turley to look at the boiler one day when the judge had no steam on, because he was going down to Washington to push a slow claim in the Patent Office.

After a careful study of the matter, the inspector said that the reason why the water would not flow from the cocks or appear in the glass gauge was that the interior of the entire boiler was incrustated to the thickness of three or four inches with solid scale. All the openings were blocked but the inlet valve and the outlet.

In his written report, which was printed in the monthly bulletin of the company just for the fun of the thing, the inspector said that the boiler did not explode because the scale had gradually formed a new solid stone boiler inside of the iron plates, and that, in all probability, the original iron casing ultimately would slowly oxidize and pass away, leaving the stone boiler safe and

sound, and in quite a serviceable condition for many years to come.

In fact, he considered it well within the boundaries of reasonable probability that the interior stone boiler might be regarded as practically indestructible, and that when our present civilization had been forgotten, McGann's boiler would be exhumed and presented to the generations then upon the earth, as demonstrating in a remarkable manner the ingenuity of man in adapting stone to boiler-uses in a remotely antecedent period.

But the judge did not mind. He glanced at the article carelessly; and then firing the boiler afresh, he set to work upon his lathe, turning up a new cylinder for his submarine boat.

Judge McGann was delighted to see Captain and Miss Bluitt coming down the garden on the morning of the visit, and his pleasure was intensified by the presence of Dr. Quelch. He ran from the studio and shook hands with his friends, and said to the doctor:

"I am so glad you came too. I have something to show you that will make you open your eyes."

"Your motor?" said the doctor.

"Yes, sir! The greatest invention of this or any other century! But wait till you see it! Come in and sit down a bit while we are getting steam up. I didn't start the fire under my boiler until a little while ago."

The party entered the outer room of the studio building, and while the judge placed Miss Bluitt on the only whole chair, and asked Captain Bluitt to occupy the nail keg, and Dr. Quelch to sit on a box, he blew the dust from a work-bench and leaped upon it, letting his legs dangle.

"We shall be ready in a few minutes," he said. "It was mighty nice of you to come to see me, particularly you, Miss Puella; and you won't regret your kindness. I have a motor here that is going to put half the steam-engines in the world in the scrap-heap! You'll see! I've had pretty tough luck in this life, but the luck has turned."

"How delightful," said Miss Bluitt.

"There is no danger from that boiler out there, is there?" asked the captain, half in fun, half in earnest.

"Not a particle! Not a particle! There's no safer boiler between here and Texas. How foolish some people are! There is more reason to be afraid of a tea-kettle than of that boiler."

"I am not a bit afraid of it," said Puella.

"Of course not," answered the judge. "Ladies always do have more courage than men!"

"You have had many inventions, judge, since I knew you," said Dr. Quelch.

"Yes, lots of 'em, and some good ones too," responded McGann. "That is my line. I made a big mistake ever going into any other business."

"What became of that electrical poultry feeder you had when I first knew you?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"Couldn't make it go, somehow. I never understood why. That device certainly was constructed upon correct scientific and economical principles, and it would have been a boon to the poultry industry of our country. You remember the particulars?"

"No."

"Why, you see, when men raise poultry for profit, either for eggs or meat, they must keep the fowls in some kind of an enclosure, and must feed them regularly in just the right quantities, with nourishing food. Mustn't they?"

"Of course."

"Mere humanity demands it," said Miss Puella.

"Well, my device arranged to do this service automatically. You know I had a battery outside the pen, connected by a wire with the feeder. This was suspended from a bar or a vertical pole in the chicken-yard, and it swung loose on a kind of a swivel. The main feeder was a hopper with a spout at the bottom, and delivery valves which opened and shut by a time clock regulated by the current. Worked like a charm!"

"Yes."

"You put the invention in place; had the hired man

fill up the hopper in the morning with prepared food, the food being inserted in the hopper in layers—say, first some corn, then a layer of small gravel (used in the gizzard, you know), then another layer perhaps of bread-crumbs, then another of powdered oyster shells for the eggs, then a dab or two of sulphur, then more corn, and so on; all packed snug and good in the hopper."

"I see," said the doctor.

"Now all being ready, the hired man turned on the current and went away. The feeder didn't even require watching."

"What happened?" asked the physician.

"Why, the feeder slowly swung around, the exhaust-valve opened, and threw a quantity of food, strictly graduated quantity of nutriment, far over, say, to the east side of the yard. Then, as the fowls would fly thither to get it, the valve would automatically shut, and the feeder, with almost human intelligence, would stop, start on the other circuit, and very, very slowly swing round, and after a carefully calculated interval, provided for by the clock-work, would fling another lot of food over, say, to the western side of the yard."

"How convenient!" said Puella.

"Why to the west?"

"To give the chickens exercise. Being penned up, they will stand around on one leg, or roost on boards and things, unless there is some incentive to motion. My feeder not only provided them with food upon scientific principles, preventing all waste, but also compelled the otherwise inert fowls to keep their bodies in a healthful condition by continued athletic exercise. It was the best thing for chickens ever devised by man."

"And yet it didn't succeed?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"No, the company formed to market it failed."

"What was the matter?"

"I dunno! Bad management, I guess. Spite-work too, I suppose. A newspaper in New York in which I refused to advertise came out with a pretended demonstration that the interest on the cost of the plant, the expense for one year of running the battery, and the

wages of the hired man to run the hopper, would take more money than the eggs and the chickens together would bring in the market for ten years. He didn't prove it, of course; but the figures impressed large investors, and they grew shy. So the thing failed."

"Perfectly shameful!" said Miss Bluitt.

"What was the loss to you?" asked Captain Bluitt, sympathetically.

"O, I don't remember. A good deal. I paid for the patents, and I got nothing from the company but ground-floor stock; and my first year's salary as president was all paid in preferred stock. I suppose I may say I lost somewhere near two or three thousand dollars. But no matter, I charged it off."

"Charged it off? Where, to what?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"Just charged it off—to nowhere. It was sunk—gone, call it what you please—I let it go. It was not the first time."

"No?"

"No. I have paid for taking out forty-three patents, and I have seven applications now pending. I have lost on forty of the patents—I don't know how much, but it is all charged off, and now I am making a fresh start."

"You have abandoned that shell-fish enterprise?" asked Captain Bluitt.

"Why yes! Didn't you hear about that? Bottom fell out of that too. I must have charged off a thousand dollars on that."

"Couldn't you get the right kind of oysters?" asked the captain.

"Not oysters—crabs! I never had anything more promising. All along the salt-water coast there are crabs by the thousands of millions, to be had for the taking. Literally myriads of them, and all good to eat; while in the West there are millions of people who never see a crab. My idea was to build refrigerator-cars and to run them direct from the shore to the western markets—quick transit. When I began operations I should simply have flooded the North-West with crabs—the great North-

West! Think of the farmers out there who never get a sniff or a smell of salt-water food, and here would be these delicious crustaceans dropped at their very doorway, as sweet and nice as if they had just been taken from the sea, and for a merely nominal price! Why, a man in Chicago told me he himself would engage to sell one carload of crabs in that single city every day. The people would be perfectly wild for them! We should have sent agents all through the west and mailed free cook-books to teach the people how to make devilled crabs and crab-salad. We had everything ready for a great crab campaign all through the North-West."

"A perfect boon to the West!" said Miss Bluitt.

"Why didn't it go?" inquired Dr. Quelch.

"The railroads combined against it. They are the worst enemies of this country. The government ought to seize and run them. One railroad president refused to give me transportation for my refrigerator-cars, and, when hard pushed for a reason—when I drove him into a corner and pinned him down, he actually had the nerve to tell me the cars would leak and wet the track! Finally, when I overcame all his objections, he gave me a rate to Milwaukee that didn't leave me enough margin to pay for the ice. I could have got fair play if I had given ground-floor shares to some of the railroad directors, and the thing would have gone through; but I would rather be poor than stoop to bribery. My total loss in that deal amounted to the value of two refrigerator-cars, which I charged to profit and loss."

"You've had hard luck," said Dr. Quelch.

"Yes indeed; worse luck with my power-saving device, even than I had with the crab enterprise."

"I heard about that," said Captain Bluitt.

"You remember, don't you? I know—I don't *think*, I *know*, or almost know, that the water that comes down a hill can be made not only to do work, for a mill, but to pump itself back again. The only obstacle that ever existed to such recovery of the spent force was the friction, and I invented an arrangement that annihilated it; the friction was as if it were not."

"With my compensating balance and my self-adjusting gravity-gear I'll bet you I can make Niagara pump itself back again. Think of that!"

"Wouldn't it be delightful," said Miss Bluitt, "to have Niagara pumped back again?"

"But, just as I had my charter and was about to issue my prospectus, a fool of a professor in the Polytechnic College killed the thing with algebra! There was nothing in his demonstration, of course; but you know how it is: capital is timid, sensitive and scary; and so the money was pulled out, and the company collapsed, after I had put my little all in gear-wheels and suction-rods, which are now nothing but old iron. Too bad! You know Mrs. Frobisher subscribed for a hundred dollars' worth of stock and paid up. Her money had to be spent for sight-lubricators, and when the failure occurred she came at me like a wild-cat and said I ought to be put in prison. Doctor Frobisher preached a sermon which they said was aimed at me, on the text: 'He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.' I've hastened to be rich, haven't I? I'd be hastening to the poor-house now if it were not for my electric motor."

"Mrs. Frobisher," remarked Miss Bluitt, "is wanting in feeling."

"I thought until yesterday," said the captain, "that you were still engaged in promoting a smoke-consumer?"

"Oh, my smoke-consumer? Ah! there *was* a grand thing! One of the most useful inventions ever devised by man! I do seem to have the worst luck! Of course you heard of that failure?"

"No, I thought it was successful," said the captain.

"So it was, mechanically; but not commercially; that is, not in my hands. I worked on that idea right along the lines suggested more than a century ago by Benjamin Franklin, and I prepared a furnace that would have forced perfect combustion—not a bit of smoke from the softest coal. Now, doctor, when you remember that every particle of smoke that comes from a chimney is fuel and stands for dollars, and when you think of the

waste going on in great cities like London, you can see for yourself that there is big money in a successful smoke-consumer, let alone the advantage to be derived from keeping the atmosphere clear and clean."

"Of course," said Dr. Quelch.

"Well, I had my company actually organized, and all going along nicely. One day we arranged for a trial of the furnace in the presence of a great body of experts and mill-owners, and particularly of a committee of the Institute of Science. I lighted the fire, turned on the draught, and in two minutes there was an explosion which shook the foundations of the everlasting hills. I could not imagine what was the matter, but the crowd of experts scattered, and any manufacturer in the state would as lief have put nitro-glycerine in his mill to start with as to adopt my smoke-consumer. But I know now what was the matter, and it was no fault of the machine, either."

"What was it?" asked the captain.

"I feel morally certain—I can't prove it in a court of justice, of course—but I am morally certain that Hunsicker, the vice-president of the company, put a charge of gunpowder into the flue behind the grate-bars."

"What for?" inquired Captain Bluitt.

"He had been all-around trying to buy up a majority of the stock, but had failed. When this disaster occurred most of the holders were ready to give it to him; some of them would have paid him to take it away. He got possession of 75 per cent. of the stock, froze me out; made another public experiment with brilliantly successful results; got a certificate from the Institute of Science, and a gold medal and written testimonials from thirty-four prominent manufacturers. He now has branch agencies in every state and in Mexico, and has an auxiliary company in Great Britain. But where am I? Out! That's where I am. I wouldn't have taken a hundred thousand dollars for that patent, but I never got a cent, except what I had to charge off."

"Well, you *have* had hard luck; and now you are working on an electric motor?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"You may say working on it, if you want to put it in that way ; but, in fact, the thing is practically completed. I will show it to you right away. Come in here."

The judge ushered his friends into the adjoining room, in the centre of which stood the motor. Over in the corner was a machine which would now be recognized as a dynamo. The judge called it his "generator." It was attached by a belt to the steam-engine.

"Stand over here," he said, "and I will turn the steam into the engine."

The engine began to move, and soon the generator also gave signs of motion and emitted sparks.

"Don't mind that," said the inventor, as Miss Bluitt, in spite of the fact that she was a woman, edged over towards the window. "It is nothing. It always does that."

The judge put his hand on a switch.

"Now watch the motor," he said.

The visitors fixed their eyes on the motor, and the judge slowly turned the switch. There was no indication that the motor was capable of anything but complete torpidity. The judge pushed the switch further over. Still the motor remained inactive. Then he pulled and pushed the switch backwards and forwards several times, with some violence ; but without response from the motor.

The judge looked troubled. He reflected for a moment. Then he exclaimed :

"Oh, I forgot the current-regulator."

He fixed the current-regulator to his satisfaction, and returned to the switch. The motor appeared to be completely indifferent to a great number of energetic vibrations of that implement.

McGann let go of the switch, turned on more steam, speeded up the engine, and with a wrench tightened three screws in the generator. Then he put a wooden box under the feed-wire, which drooped upon the floor, and returned to the switch. The motor manifested no indication of activity.

"Captain," said the inventor, "just see if that wire on the other side of the motor is free from the iron pedestal."

"Completely," said the captain, touching the wire with his cane.

"It's mighty queer," said McGann, with a puzzled look upon his face. "The thing went along all right last night. Went beautifully."

The visitors hardly knew what to say.

"I believe it's that commutator," said Judge McGann, at last. "I've had no end of trouble with that plagued thing. Just a minute, please."

For at least five minutes the judge struggled with the commutator, and then, wiping his fingers on a handful of shavings, he resumed his hold of the switch, saying :

"Now she'll go."

And she did go. Slowly the motor began to move, and having made three complete revolutions, it came again to a full stop.

"Maybe the bearings want oiling," remarked the judge. Seizing the oil-can he applied the lubricant to the bearings. Then he looked to see if the belt on the generator slipped, and after taking a twist out of the feed-wire, he turned on the current again.

The motor gave a slight preliminary jerk, and then, like a being that had had a better second thought, returned to a state of quiescence.

"It seems such a pity, too," remarked Judge McGann, mournfully, "when you have all taken the trouble to come out to see it."

"Can't you turn it with your hand?" asked Puella, with a feeling of acute sympathy for the disappointed man.

"Oh, certainly; but a motor turned by the hand would be such a very poor kind of a motor. It's 'ways the way with things when you want to show them off," said the judge. "That machine went along yesterday as if it were alive. Let me look at the reciprocating crank. Why yes, that's what's the matter! I put a wooden block under that crank when I closed the place last night, and forgot it. Now she'll go."

The judge removed the block, and flung it to the other end of the room with such violence that it knocked a saw and two cold chisels from the rack and dropped them

on the floor. Then he put the switch on once more, and the motor went around twice. Then something spit and sizzled and flamed up with a quick flash, and the motor stopped again.

With an expression of intense disgust upon his countenance, the judge dropped the switch and exclaimed:

"Burned out again! Hang it!"

Then he kicked the motor with a degree of violence and said:

"That ends it, doctor! I can't repair that damage in less than a week."

The visitors expressed sorrow and sympathy.

"Oh, it's all right; but the plague of it is, captain," said the judge, "I was going to ask you to invest in that thing, and now you'll think it's a failure! But it isn't! No, sir! It's a gold mine."

"You won't have to charge it off, you think?" asked the captain, with dry humour.

"What! that motor? Wait till I get it fixed, and you'll say that the man who goes in on the ground-floor is lucky."

"Well," said Captain Bluit, as he and his companions prepared to retire, "you send for me when it is ready, and I'll talk to you about it."

The visitors went out into the garden, but the captain said to McGann:

"One minute, judge."

He took the inventor aside and whispered:

"Are you pressed for money, judge?"

"Well," said McGann, "I've got pretty close to the end of the string. I wouldn't mind——"

"I'll send you a check for fifty dollars in the morning on account of my first subscription to the motor."

Then, bidding farewell, the visitors started homeward.

"Poor McGann," said the captain to the doctor, "he has another failure in his hands, sure."

CHAPTER X

THE HERO BECOMES A PROFESSIONAL MAN

THE fact is, Walter Drury, like many other men, had talents which were not known to himself, and not guessed at by his friends until opportunity came to him.

Often after he began work upon the *Evening Times* up in the great city, he recalled Uncle Bluitt's assertion that most of the failures may be attributed to misfits, and he thought his uncle right. Walter, compelled to earn his living while little more than a boy, had endeavoured simply to find employment which would give him pay, and as commercial positions were most abundant and easiest to get, and as his friends had gone into commercial life, naturally he had attempted to learn business in which buying and selling were done.

Traffic was distasteful to him from the beginning, but he thought perhaps this was because boys prefer play to work. He was conscious that his tastes were different from those of other young people with whom he was thrown into business; but he was not at all sure that any employment would suit his taste, for the only things he cared much for were study and writing, and these seemed to him to offer no promise of daily bread.

And so, in one position after another, he had tried valiantly to play a part as a commercial man, and in every instance complete, humiliating failure greeted him.

He began seriously to fear that he should never succeed at anything, and some of his relatives had the

same apprehension. What he needed was a wise counsellor and an open door. He found the first in a youth of kindred tastes, whom he had met while he was journeying about the country proving that he could not become a salesman.

This young man was a reporter upon the *Evening Times*, and in speaking with Drury, he expressed his delight with the work and recommended it to Walter. Walter thought he could do such work, and he felt that he should like to do it. He perceived that he had better education than his friend, and this increased his confidence that he might succeed as a reporter, and perhaps reach greater heights in the profession than those to which his friend aspired.

Surrendering with something like joyfulness his last commercial place, Walter entered the office of the *Times* as a reporter and plunged into the work with enthusiasm. It was a period when a very bright man upon a very bright paper was certain to have quick appreciation from his readers and his employers; and Walter was unusually bright. He had also very remarkable quickness and clearness as a writer, a fact he had not known. Thus he delighted in composition, and he contributed to the journal matter much in excess of the expectation of the managing authorities, who were not slow to perceive that all of it was good.

A youth who could write uncommonly well; who could prepare attractive, original matter, and was willing and eager to do much more than his share of work, was a rare being in that office, as in other newspaper offices; and Walter was pleasantly surprised to have his pay considerably increased before he had been for two weeks a journalist.

This and other evidences of appreciation stimulated him strongly, and he strove to do even better. It was a novel experience for him to have work to do that he could do with delight, and the assurance that it was good work intensified his pleasure.

As often happens when Fortune begins to smile, she had larger favours waiting for him.

Almost without warning, two of the editors resigned from the staff to accept positions upon a journal in a Western city. The manager of the *Times* called Walter into his office, and after relating the fact to him, asked :

"Do you think you could fill an editorship?"

"I think so," answered Walter, bravely.

"Well, you shall have a chance to try," and he gave the young man the place, his salary being doubled.

It may be taken for granted that down in Turley there was a damsel who was informed of all these wonderful achievements and victories and advancements, and who read with deep interest the journals sent to her in which, first, were reporter's articles and afterwards editorials, written with such wisdom and positiveness and deep gravity as might have trailed from the pen of a venerable philosopher of sixty years. And with what admiration she examined the dramatic criticisms and the book criticisms prepared by this young editor, who spoke in print about the drama and literature as if mastery of both had been his pastime in years long flown.

In his letters, which were really almost too frequent, although there seemed in each case to be a positively good reason for writing just at that time, Walter told the story of his successes, and of the crowning success, and expressed the pleasure he found in hard work that was congenial while it was profitable. He secretly hoped she would find in his triumph some reason for rejoicing, some reason for admiration, and that perhaps some rumour would come to papa's ears of the surprising movement of an inexperienced youth within three months from the bottom place upon the staff to a position not very far from the top.

But while letters and marked newspapers are very useful as messengers, there is something better in seeing face to face; and so Walter found a way to obtain respite for a day from his responsible duties, and that day he would spend in Turley.

It was all arranged beforehand, that there was to be a long drive out through the country (to get chestnuts,

he said in his letter), and that he was to spend the evening at Dorothea's house, if the way should be open to blissfulness of that nature.

So, taking the early train for Turley, and calling at the Hamilton mansion to be sure that Dorothea would be ready right after luncheon, Walter went down to Uncle Bluitt's house and got him to promise to lend him his bay mare and brand-new buggy.

To be really sure that the mare and the buggy were in the stable, so that there should be no mischance, Walter went out through the garden and looked upon the animal and the vehicle. Then he tried to find Rufus, so that Rufus would have the mare hitched when the hour for beginning the journey should come.

Rufus could not be found, and so Walter walked over to his house and knocked upon the door.

Hannah, the wife of Rufus, opened the door, and informing him that Rufus would be home again in a few minutes, invited him to come and wait.

Captain Bluitt's hired man, Rufus Potter, had been born in the mountain country of Eastern Tennessee of parents who could with difficulty read and write. His home was a log cabin, and his fate from his childhood hard work. At the age of nineteen he had gone to Knoxville to find employment, and had succeeded in obtaining a position as driver of a freight wagon. He had never seen the ocean, but what he heard about it, and the little he was able to read about it, gave him a craving to look upon the salt water, and he had even some small notion that he might like to become a sailor.

When he had saved enough money to pay his railroad fare, he came eastward to the great city, and shipped as a landsman upon a vessel bound for Rio de Janeiro.

Under the most promising circumstances, the life of a wholly inexperienced landsman upon a ship manned by other seamen could not be overcharged with joyfulness; but the personal appearance of Rufus, his awkwardness, his want of sense, and his almost incredible capacity for blundering exposed him to contempt, which sometimes

THE HERO BECOMES A PROFESSIONAL MAN 159

expressed itself in ridicule and sometimes in harsh treatment.

It was his misfortune to have fallen overboard three times during the voyage to Rio; and the third time he was brought up on the deck in a condition of unconsciousness. As his senses returned to him he heard the voice of the mate saying, "If he goes over again, just let him go. It's Fate. He is just shark's-meat, anyway." But the captain thought differently; and when Rufus had been fully restored, the captain directed that he should wear two cork life-preservers, day and night, so that the chances of rescue would be enlarged when next Rufus should be precipitated into the rolling waves. Rufus's spirit revolted at this humiliation, but as the mate plainly indicated that rebellion would bring stripes besides the cork-jacket he submitted, and remained in a condition of clear misery until the ship reached Rio.

There, one night, he dropped overboard with his life-preserver on, determined to perish rather than to endure the anguish of another voyage under such conditions. Hiding himself and feeding himself as he could until he saw the brig at last sail from the bay, he made his way to the city penniless, helpless, and very low, but glad that his cork-jackets could be now laid aside permanently.

A policeman, observing him and perceiving that he was lost and forlorn, took him to the office of the American consul. Upon entering, they found there Captain Bluitt of the barque *Romulus*. Rufus related with artlessness and some touches of pathos his melancholy history, and the kind heart of Captain Bluitt was touched. He consented to take Rufus with him upon the return voyage of the *Romulus*, and to make him his cabin steward.

When the captain gave up sea-faring, Rufus clung to him, and the captain brought him to Turley, where Rufus took charge of the horses, for which he had great fondness, dug the garden, and performed the ordinary functions of the hired man upon a place of an acre and a half. Rufus delighted in this work. He would rather

have worked for Captain Bluitt without wages than to have grown rich in the service of another man.

Soon after coming to Turley, Rufus, thin, homely, with a sharp nose and faintly-blue eyes, and with a tuft of sandy beard upon the tip of his chin, was bold enough to woo, and fortunate enough to get, Hannah Wilcox, who since her childhood had been Mrs. Frobisher's maid. They were married, and Captain Bluitt built for them a small frame house at the back of his garden, where they lived in that happiness which follows upon a marriage born of true love.

Hannah was much superior to Rufus mentally, and she had had some education at the public school. The personal appearance of Rufus, to the ordinary observer, seemed unlikely to stir up violent enthusiasm in the feminine bosom; but Hannah's affection was real, and it succeeded in presenting Rufus to her mind as a man of exalted qualities, physical and intellectual. She thought him fine-looking; she thought him heroic; she believed all the stories he told her of his prowess upon the seas; and the stimulative influence of her admiration urged Rufus more and more to permit his imagination to play upon the experiences of a sailor's life, until really it seemed to Hannah, and even to Rufus himself, that Rufus ought to have a place by the side of Magellan, Captain Cook, and the other famous navigators.

"Rufus," said Captain Bluitt to Dr. Frobisher, "never had the smallest glimmer of sense, but he is faithful, and he does the small jobs about the place here very well. As for seamanship, he never knew for certain on which end of the ship the rudder is, and I'm sure he used to think that the compass helped to make the ship move through the water. He asked me one day when we were tacking what made the sun shift from one side of the vessel to the other, and he firmly believed the story when the cook told him that the masts grew out of the bottom of the ship."

Mrs. Potter, clean, and smart, and bright, bustled about the room for a few moments after Walter entered the house, completing her dinner arrangements, while

she managed four young children who played about the floor. Then she sat down near to Walter, and wiping her clean hands on her clean white apron, she said :

"Excuse me, Mr. Walter, but I'm so glad to see you ! I've heard so much about you, and seen you, too, at a distance, but it's a perfect joy to me to have you in my very own house."

"What is your name ?" asked Walter.

"My name, given to me in baptism, where my sponsors then did for me, is Hannah ; but I think it is the most perfectly hateful name, and I would change it in a minute if I could."

"Why don't you change it ?"

"Well, Mr. Walter, I have few differences with Rufus, who is just a lovely husband, overflowing with tenderness, but he and I can't agree what name to change Hannah to. I want to be called Gladys, and he wants to call me Myrtle, because he says he can remember Myrtle so much easier than he can remember Gladys, though, to save my life, I can't understand why any man's memory should be so deplorable that it can hold on to Myrtle while it lets go of Gladys. I did offer to split the difference with Rufus, and to have him call me Beryl, a perfectly lovely name, but not so sweet as Gladys, but he said Beryl is just as difficult for the memory to retain its grasp of as Gladys, and so we had to drop the whole plan, and he just goes along in the old way and calls me Han."

"That sounds well enough, I think," said Walter, in a tone intending to convey comfort.

"O, I can stand it, Mr. Walter, from such a man as Rufus ! Mr. Walter, you don't know Rufus ! He may be plain, and I don't say he ain't, but he has in him many elements of greatness."

"Not much chance to display them here, you think ?"

"No, no, Mr. Walter ! Here Rufus is not in his rightful sphere. He has powers far, far beyond such work as this."

"When the assessor asked me to give him the name of Rufus's business, I said 'mariner,' for that's what

Rufus really is. He tends to Cap'n Bluitt's horses, and makes garden to oblige the cap'n, to whom he is fondly attached ; but Rufus's real occupation is that of a navigator of the mighty deep. There's where his affections is, and, if it wasn't for me and Cap'n Bluitt, Rufus at this very moment would be bounding o'er the billows of the fathomless ocean."

"It's a dangerous business," said Walter.

"Yes, it takes real courage to be a true mariner, and Rufus has got courage if he ain't got anything else. Many and many's the time, as he tells me when he talks of his wild adventures, that Rufus has been out on the very top of the giddy mast, with the bark beneath him pitching like a crazy horse, and threatening to hurl him into the waste of waters ; but Rufus's spirit never quailed. With the wind tearing through the tattered sheets, and the waves raging and roaring and seething with foam, Rufus, from his lofty perch, has looked with unflinching gaze at the fierce tempest and hurled defiance at it. That's what Rufus told me himself."

"Really a remarkable exhibition of nerve," said Walter, smiling.

"And one time when the savage sharks, ferocious with hunger, were lurking around the ship looking for their prey, Rufus dived overboard right among them to rescue a shipmate, and, picking him up, swum with one hand and both legs while he sustained his drowning fellow-being with the other hand, and brought him safe and sound to the deck of the vessel. No wonder Cap'n Bluitt is fond of Rufus. The cap'n has seen him many and many's the time in moments of awful danger, when Rufus was just as tranquil as a man asleep in his pew in church, and not a nerve in his body quivered, so Rufus himself said.

"And this is why Cap'n Bluitt put his hand on Rufus's shoulder one day and said to him, 'My man, you have in you the making of a great sailor,' and he would have made Rufus his first lieutenant then and there, if Rufus had only understood the mysteries of the navigator's art, and so Cap'n Bluitt, taking Rufus from

time to time in his cabin, began to impart them to him, so that Rufus now has mastered them, and can turn the prow of a great ship anywheres on the trackless ocean, and direct it a bee-line to the haven where it would be."

"Rufus understands navigation, does he?"

"Perfectly. Cap'n Bluitt has unfolded the whole science to him, but little real use is it to Rufus to know about these things, seeing that his family, and an ironical fate, have decreed that he should spend his life henceforth upon dry land. But Rufus is determined not to disdain this useful knowledge, and so he practises every day out in the garden there amid the asparagus-beds, where there are no trees to obscure the view of the sun. Rufus takes the captain's sexton and other nautical instruments, and as noontide approaches, he makes his observations, taking latitude and longitude, and discovering what is indeed the true time of day. And the fact that Rufus really does know how to perform this operation correctly is proved, in my opinion, by the fact that almost every day he shows that the town-clock is wrong—sometimes, Rufus tells me, from one hour to four out of the way. Rufus, therefore, disregards the clock, and carries the true time in his watch, and that's the reason why some ignorant people, who depend upon that worthless town-clock, sometimes complain of him that he is late, when in deed and in truth he is on time to the minute."

"The proof that Rufus is right is conclusive," remarked Walter.

"And there is another thing Rufus learned from Cap'n Bluitt, hardly less significant than navigation, and that is what Cap'n Bluitt calls the use of the Roman numerals. I don't pretend to know much about it myself, but Rufus's mind has a quick grasp of such matters, and he tells me they used to use letters of the alphabet instead of figgers in counting; thus IV will stand for 4, and so forth, just like on a clock. Rufus was so fascinated by the system that he began to keep his accounts with the captain for the butter and eggs and fruit and vegetables he sold down here to Mr. Shoemaker's store, in the

Roman numerals, and it was his delight to use them. But he has given up the practice now at Captain Bluitt's earnest personal request."

"Why?" asked Walter.

"Because the first month after Rufus began to figger that way he went to the cap'n to settle up, and it appeared from the report that Rufus owed Cap'n Bluitt a sum of money ranging somewheres near to four hundred thousand dollars or thereabouts and upwards, and Rufus he said to Cap'n Bluitt, 'I don't see how that can be when I only sold eight bushels of potatoes and a few tomats and four pounds of butter and a few stewing apples, and anyhow,' said Rufus to Cap'n Bluitt, 'it is difficult for me to know how I am ever going to pay you four hundred thousand dollars and upwards when my wages is but eight dollars a week with milk and eggs and kindling wood throwed in.' Whereupon Cap'n Bluitt kindly proceeded to overhaul Rufus's monthly report, and ere long discovered that the mistake was caused by the fact that Rufus misunderstood the cap'n when he explained to him the system of Roman numerals, for Rufus misunderstood him to say that M stood for 5, whereas really V stands for 5, and M stands for 1000, and so on, and other letters mixed the same way through misapprehension or Rufus not hearing aright, with the result that the money owed by Rufus to Cap'n Bluitt for the month's transactions, instead of running far up to a staggering sum of hundreds of thousands and upwards, was readily reduced by accurate arithmetical proceedings to eleven dollars and thirty-eight cents. So Rufus dropped the Roman figgers, and was glad to do it until he could get more practice, because he said Cap'n Bluitt might some time feel queer and crooked, and take advantage of him when the report spoke of millions, and maybe seize our household furniture, and put me and Rufus in jail for debt. So now Rufus keeps tally of the butter and pears by cutting notches in the studding-post on the left-hand side as you go in the door of the cow-stable."

"That really seems to me safer," said Walter.

At this juncture Rufus entered the house with his oldest boy, Sammy, and the three other children, who had come from school to eat their dinners.

After greeting Walter, Rufus promised to have the mare and the buggy ready for him at ten minutes of two o'clock precisely, and Walter returned to the mansion.

When Dorry Hamilton came from the house wrapped in her warm grey coat, and carrying a heavy shawl for further protection, if that should be needed upon the ride, Walter felt as he stood by the stone carriage-step, ready to help her to climb into the vehicle, as if he were about to have altogether the most delightful experience of his life. She looked so pretty too in the coat of becoming colour and shape, in the silk handkerchief that encircled her throat, and in the tasteful bonnet in which her sweet face was framed.

And when she was seated and comfortably tucked in, and Walter sat beside her, elbow to elbow, sure that he should have her, and her alone, for his companion for the whole afternoon, it seemed to him as if that old complaint he had heard so much, and which he himself had more than once made, about life being tragical, could hardly have any basis in fact. At any rate there are compensations. Tragedy there may be, but nobody can deny that there is a generous proportion of joy, and Walter thought within himself that he would be quite willing to accept some of the tragedy, if he could now and then have such an allotment of pure bliss as had now been bestowed upon him.

It was an October day, and there was a frosty flavour in the atmosphere, making wraps desirable for comfort, and yet it was one of those days bright with sunshine, and rich in the autumnal colourings of nature, when life really seems better worth living than at any other time.

As the youth and the maiden, joyous with health and hope, and more joyous still because they had their first glorious glimpses of "that new world which is the old," where the master-passion makes life perpetually rapturous, drove out from the town into the lane bordered

with trees crimsoned with autumnal tints, and looked away toward the hills covered with gold, and fairly flaming in the sunshine, Walter said :

"What a queer thing it was for the poet to speak of these days in the autumn as 'the melancholy days ; the saddest of the year.' I think they are not a bit sad. They seem to me the most delightful of all the days."

"So do I," answered his companion. "The poet was feeling sad, I guess."

"Why," said Walter, "the heat of the summer is past, we have coolness and comfort without cold, and all the earth is beautiful with colouring compared with which mere verdure is tame. Look at that tree. It is like a mass of crimson fire. Summer has nothing half so splendid."

"The mood we are in affects our view of things always, I suppose," said the girl.

"Yes," answered Walter joyfully, "and it may be that the world looks so lovely to me now, because I am so happy."

It was the boldest thing he had ever said to her. She did not reply, but a glance at her face convinced him that she was by no means unhappy.

"No doubt it is true," he continued, "that our feelings colour everything. I remember a man who was in deep affliction saying to me that the sunshine looked black to him—literally black."

"How dreadful ! Poor man !"

"It seemed to me like exaggeration, but maybe it was not. I am sure that everything seems to have new beauty for me within the last few months."

"Your occupation is suited to your tastes—that is the reason."

Walter knew that this was not the only reason, and he guessed that she knew it, but he answered :

"Oh yes, of course. The slightest labour in my old business was hard and hateful, but now I can do any quantity of work and delight in it as if it were pastime."

"How nice that is," she said with sympathy in her voice.

With masculine selfishness, his talk was of his own things.

"Do you know that when I look back at myself as I was—well, early last summer, I can't understand how I found mere existence endurable; everything seems so cold and uninteresting, and even repulsive."

"I feel in that way too," said the girl artlessly.

"I think of that horrid traffic I worked at so hard and with so little interest, and then—then, I didn't know you. You have been so kind, and your letters have given me so much comfort."

"They were poor enough letters, I fear," she said.

"If you only knew how they helped and comforted me, you would not say so. It was much that I had work to do that I liked, but much also—very, very much—that you cared to read what I had written and to praise it."

"Because it was so good," she said heartily. "Even father spoke very warmly in praise of two or three of your articles."

"Did he?" said Walter, eagerly.

"Yes, several of them, and mother thought they were wonderful for a man who had had so little experience. And as for Florabella Burns—ah! if you could hear the fine things she said about you, your ears would tingle."

"Mrs. Burns won't have to develop much further before she turns into a completely-equipped angel."

"I love her so much," said the girl warmly; "I don't know why, but I care more for her than for girls of my own age."

"I wish I could think it is because she praises me," said Walter. There was a tempting opportunity for another movement toward perfect bliss, and he could hardly resist it.

Dorothea laughed lightly, and said:

"She praises all my friends."

Dorothea felt as if perhaps the crisis had better not be reached in that particular place at that particular moment.

Walter had a strong impulse to make the plunge and

have it over, but he reflected that he had known the girl but three or four months, that she might not care for him now, or she might not care for him as much as she would do after a while, and that, if the very worst came, it would be singularly unpleasant to have to drive three or four miles homeward in a buggy with a girl who had refused him. And then papa might be more likely to smile upon the undertaking when the editor's salary should grow larger.

He decided to wait.

Then they came to the place where the great chestnut trees, growing in the field upon a high bank, overspread the roadside, and then the bay mare stopped, while Walter, dismounting, hitched her to a small tree, and then helped Dorry to disentangle herself from the wraps and to descend from the vehicle.

The ground upon the side of the roadway was strewn thickly with brown leaves, amid which were open chestnut-burs riven asunder (according to popular belief) by the frost, and hidden among the leaves were quantities of chestnuts, brown, fat, and cold to the touch, as they were tempting to the eye.

Walter had passed the time when chestnut-seeking, regarded from the standpoint of the mere consumer, had in it incitements to enthusiasm, and Dorothea Hamilton was not eager for it as a means of obtaining supplies for the appetite; but both of them thought, as they wandered about under the great trees amid the rustling leaves, with no one near to listen to their discourse, with the sunlight sifting through the overhead branches and streaking the dead leaves and the dust with gold, that never before had the gathering of chestnuts had anything like such an infusion of poetic interest as that which was plainly perceptible now.

As he picked the nuts from the ground, Walter put them into a little basket brought by Dorothea, and when she had a handful she came over to him and dropped them into the basket, with what the young man thought such sweet grace that he would have been willing to continue for hours to gather such a harvest if the day

had not so much shortened itself since the summer-time.

But before the basket was filled, Dorothea said :

"I think we should stop now and make ready to go home. The sun is not far from going down."

So they put the basket in the back part of the buggy, and then he helped her in once more and wrapped her up, and untying the mare, got into the vehicle himself and drove as slowly as he could upon the homeward road.

To entertain her, Walter told her of his talk with Hannah Potter, and of Hannah's enthusiasm for Rufus, and of her perfect faith in Rufus.

Dorothea laughed heartily, and said :

"Poor old Rufus! He has been an admirer of Florabella. Did she tell you of the present he brought to her?"

"No."

"He brought her a dog, which he explained to her was 'a plug' dog, and very valuable. She has it yet. Last year, when there was a good deal of malarial fever in Turley, Rufus asked Dr. Quelch about it, and remarked, 'Some says it's infectious, and some says it's contagious, but what I want to know, doctor, is it ketchin'?'"

"That is really fine," said Walter; "I must remember that. But what impressed me was that his wife, who seems like a bright woman, has actually persuaded herself that that ungainly creature is sublime, heroic. 'He has many elements of greatness,' she said to me."

"How funny!" said Dorothea. "And yet," she said, suddenly becoming sober, "and yet, if she loves him——"

"Well," asked Walter, "if she loves him, what then?"

"Then? Oh, then no wonder she glorifies him!"

"Love, the transformer," said Walter.

"Yes, yes. Is it not so?" exclaimed the girl. "If she loves him, all his ungainliness is grace, and his stupidity wisdom. A woman must have one hero."

Afterwards Walter thought himself a fool that he did not give this woman at that very moment a chance to

say if she had found her hero yet, but instead he said:

"How wonderful is the love that can make Rufus seem heroic! It is a severe dead-lift that can exalt such a clumsy, ignorant fellow."

Dorothea made no response. She felt that she had perhaps spoken unwisely. She was convinced by Walter's answer that she had done so.

The carriage neared Graver's Point. "Would you be willing to stop here, just for a moment?" asked Walter. "I have never seen the park. You know I did not leave the road when I was here last summer. I want to look at the place where I first met you."

She agreed, and again they both dismounted, and when he had made the mare secure, the youth and the girl walked slowly outward toward the river.

The river had on it some of the tints of the setting sun, and when they had looked out in silence upon the flowing stream, they turned, and there off in the west, beyond the hills which began to grow sombre as the light was withdrawn from the eastern slopes, all the sky was shining with the splendour of gold and purple and green. The few drifting clouds were masses of flame, and from below, as if all space behind the summits were filled with glory, streamed upward an immeasurable expanse of golden light quivering in the autumn air.

"Isn't it lovely?" exclaimed Dorothea.

"Lovely beyond the possibility of words."

"Nothing in all nature is so magnificent as that."

"No, nothing," answered Walter. "How absurd it is to try to represent such overwhelming brilliancy with paint! No man can paint that."

"It seems almost as if it might be an opening of the gates of the Celestial City," said Dorothea, solemnly. "The glory of the Lord—of the Lord of Hosts!"

"But it is of the earth earthy," said Walter. "Already it begins to fade."

"And that will shine for ever and for ever," she answered.

They walked away from the cliff.

THE HERO BECOMES A PROFESSIONAL MAN 171

"There," said Dorothea, pointing to a bench, "is where I sat with Florabella when I saw the child about to fall over the cliff."

"And you rescued it?" asked Walter.

"That is how I sprained my ankle," she said.

"I never heard of it before. And so you are a real heroine?" he remarked.

"Oh, no. It was nothing. Any one would have done it without thinking."

"But how lucky it was you were hurt," he said.

"Lucky?"

"For me, I mean. I might never have known you, had you not been injured at that very time in that very place. Of course I am sorry, so sorry that you suffered."

Then they rode homeward once more, and he said:

"I shall never forget that place. Do you know places sometimes acquire a kind of sacredness? and perhaps this will do so. You will come here again, will you not?"

"Oh, yes!"

"With me, too!"

"Perhaps so."

It was to be the lot of one of them, when many years had flown, to come to this spot, stricken, afflicted, lonely; to traverse it step by step; to say, "It was here we stood and saw the sunset; here we walked beneath the trees; here we looked at the great river, and here we had joy deep, intense, unspeakable—joy that is now but a memory, joy that will not be known again until we meet in heaven—we two; we two who are one, no matter if infinity lies between us to separate us, for love spans the gulf of death, imperishable, eternal, triumphant."

"I go back to the city to-night," he said as the carriage slowly entered Turley, while the dusk enveloped the town. "You will write again to me, will you not?"

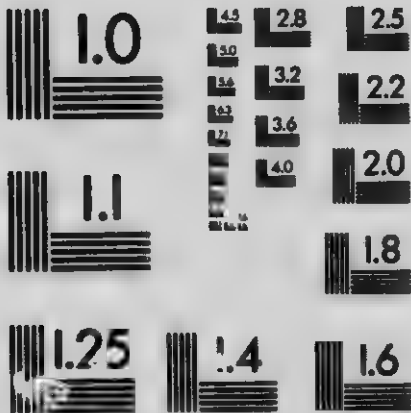
"Yes, yes, I will write," she said.

"You can not imagine the pleasure I have had to-day in your company!" continued the youth.



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"I have had a delightful time, and I thank you so much."

"Good-bye," he said, as she dismounted and prepared to enter the house.

"Good-bye," she said, and he thought she looked love at him from those soft grey eyes. He knew that her hand lingered in his, when he pressed it.

"She is mine," he said to himself as he drove down the street a happy man.

And she, as she hurried to her room, to sit and think over and over again of the words he had said, and of his appearance and his tenderness, said to herself, "That is my hero! I am sure he loves me!"

CHAPTER XI

THE ARM OF THE LAW IS EXTENDED

WHEN Mrs. Metcalf returned to her home in the Aramingo region in the summer-time, after encountering Becky Slifer at Captain Bluitt's house, she reported to her husband the particulars of the incident, and Mr. Metcalf determined to adopt measures to procure the return of the fugitive slave to the plantation.

But Mr. Metcalf did not act quickly. No Metcalf ever acted quickly, unless under the impulse of strong passion. It was a part of the Metcalf nature and the Metcalf practice to maintain a condition of repose. To be in a hurry about anything, to betray emotion, excepting in extraordinary circumstances, to permit agitation of mind or body, to make any kind of a fuss, was to manifest want of dignity, absence of poise; and no Metcalf (unless he was a very poor relation) ever neglected dignity or was indifferent to poise.

Becky was a valuable bit of property, but Mr. Metcalf had much other property, and Mrs. Metcalf's narrative encouraged the belief that the woman would remain where she was until the Metcalf arm should be stretched out in a perfectly tranquil manner to seize her and bring her home.

Not that Mr. Metcalf entertained the purpose to extend his personal arm to catch the slave. He would not have touched her had he encountered her in the street of the neighbouring town. He might not even have nodded to her, or given her a glance of recognition.

No Metcalf could condescend to grapple with a negro, any more than with a bull-calf or an unruly swine. It was Mr. Metcalf's purpose that he would have his overseer send a man who had acquired expertness in slave-catching, to fetch the woman home by the due process of law, and to have him go upon the mission with a suggestion in his mind that, if the law should not work promptly, to bring her home at any rate. The promise of a reward of five hundred dollars for her return had not been withdrawn, nor would it be.

After permitting several months to elapse, and having deliberately disposed of some other and perhaps more important matters that had engaged his mind, Mr. Metcalf one day summoned his overseer, and after giving him the information that had been brought home by Mrs. Metcalf, instructed him to send John Blodgett, the slave-catcher, whose services Mr. Metcalf had more than once before employed, to take possession of Becky Slifer.

Blodgett appeared in Turley at the end of the winter, and after determining the fact that the woman was still living quietly with Captain Bluitt, permitted himself to have a period of repose, after the Metcalf fashion, at the hotel.

Having considered the situation, and in a leisurely manner made himself acquainted with Captain Bluitt's grounds and mansion, Blodgett concluded to try, first of all, what the processes of the law could do for him.

He went, therefore, to a justice of the peace, and making the necessary oath, obtained a warrant for the arrest of Rebecca Slifer as a runaway slave.

The proposition of the magistrate was that he should have the warrant served by the constable, Blodgett, if necessary, assisting; but Blodgett made objection to this proceeding upon the ground that if two men should approach the woman, her suspicion would be excited, and there might be trouble.

"If you will let me do it," he said, "I will arrest her myself, without any fuss, and clap the handcuffs on her and bring her here."

He chose for the performance of the task the early afternoon of a day when Captain Bluitt happened to be absent in the city. Blodgett was not sure of the captain's disposition toward the case, and he wished to have no interference if that could be avoided.

He went to Captain Bluitt's garden, opened the gate, and sauntered carelessly along the path that ran around the house to the kitchen-door.

He knocked upon the door gently, but opened it without waiting for response, and pushed his way into the kitchen.

Becky was there, engaged in her usual work.

She stopped and looked sharply at the intruder, who retained an appearance of perfect tranquillity. He sat down upon a chair near to the door.

"Is Captain Bluitt at home?" he asked.

"No, suh," said Becky, still suspicious, "he's not yer to-day."

"Hm-m-m," said Blodgett, looking at the floor, with the air of a man who is disappointed. "I wanted to see him."

"You live here, do you?" he asked.

"Doan' you see me yer? What's I doin' yer, but livin' yer?"

"What's your name?"

"I'se not 'bleeged to tell my name to dis man or dat man twel I know what he wants it fur. Mr. Bluitt know my name, dat's 'nuff."

"It seems to me I've seen you before, somewhere. Let me see," and Blodgett rose from his chair and moved towards her.

Becky darted towards the door that led from the kitchen to the house, but Blodgett intercepted her. Then she ran to the door that opened to the garden. He pounced upon her and succeeded in snapping one handcuff upon her wrist. She evaded the other, and drawing her manacled arm quickly away she screamed and made another effort to reach the door.

Blodgett seized her, and then she turned on him, and fought with the fury of a tigress, while she called for

help. He tried to choke her, but she leaped upon him and flung him over, and the two wrestled and rolled over and over upon the floor. Blodgett felt that he had undertaken almost too much for one man; he wished he had brought the constable.

Becky's cries brought Miss Bluitt to the kitchen, from the house, and Rufus from the garden. As they entered the room the two combatants were in the fury of the fight, and to the observers it really seemed as if Becky were likely to be the victor.

Miss Bluitt regarded the scene with amazement and terror.

"Separate them, Rufus," she cried. "Pull them apart! This is perfectly, perfectly dreadful!"

Rufus seemed somewhat timid about meddling with the fighters, but Miss Bluitt urged him forward, and laying her own hands on Becky, with Rufus she pulled her away and raised her to her feet.

While Blodgett scrambled upward, Becky stood panting, dishevelled, covered with dust, with eyes glaring at him as if she would like to have one more bout with him, that she might bring his career to a conclusion then and there.

"Becky! what is the matter? What is this terrible uproar about?" asked Miss Bluitt. "And you man!" she said without waiting for a response from Becky, "you wicked, scandalous man, whoever you are! How dare you come into my house and try to kill my servant in this awful manner?" And Miss Bluitt stamped her foot and glared at Blodgett almost as furiously as Becky did.

"Beg pardon, mum," answered Blodgett, looking somewhat shame-faced at being caught in the very act of suffering defeat from a woman, "but I came here as an agent of the law, and this nigger flew at me like a she-cat before I could hardly say a word."

"Licked you too!" interjected Rufus.

"Rufus!" exclaimed Puella, stamping her foot again, "be quiet!"

"Yes'm," said Rufus, "but I believe she kin lick two like him."

"Madam," said Blodgett, without deigning to remark upon Rufus's opinion of his ability as a warrior, "I have here a warrant for the arrest of this woman, and she resisted my attempt to serve it."

"What kind of a warrant? Warrant for what?"

"Madam, she is Mrs. Metcalf's slave, and I am going to take her before a magistrate to have her sent back."

"No youse not! I'se gwine befo' no magistrate," said Becky, fiercely. The unsuccessful handcuff dangled from her left wrist as she spoke.

"Let me see the warrant," said Miss Bluitt. Blodgett handed it to her and she read it.

"I do wish brother were at home," she said, "I haven't the least idea what to do."

"Madam," said Blodgett, "it would make no difference if he were at home. Law is law, and he knows it. This woman will have to go before the justice, no matter who opposes it. Nobody can defy a paper like this."

"Will she have fair play there?"

"Certainly, madam."

"Is there a chance for her to get off?"

"I hope not, madam, but there may be. Nobody can tell."

Miss Bluitt turned to Becky and whispered to her:

"Becky, I am very sorry, but you had better go."

"I'se not gwine widout trouble, missy."

"Becky, if you resist they will bring a dozen men to take you, and they will hurt you, and they will be so angry that they will never let you go. If you will go quietly with the man, I will send Rufus in a hurry to bring Dr. Quelch, and I will have our lawyer, Major Gridley, go with you to defend you. Will you consent?"

Becky thought a while, and then she said:

"Missy, I'll go ef you'll have Rufus git de majah at oncet befo' he go fo' Dokker Quelch."

Miss Bluitt called Rufus.

"Take a horse, quickly, and go to Major Gridley's office first, and tell him to be at the magistrate's to defend Becky when she gets there; then ride as hard as

you can to Dr. Quelch's and bring him over to the magistrate's."

"Becky will go with you," said Miss Bluitt to Blodgett, "but you must wait for a few moments until she can arrange her clothing. I cannot have her dragged through the streets in this dreadful condition."

"Very well, ma'm," said Blodgett, glad to have the matter so comfortably adjusted. "I'll wait; there is no hurry."

Miss Bluitt helped Becky to adjust her dress, to re-tie her turban, which had fallen off in the scuffle, and to make herself generally tidy.

"Tek dem off!" said the negress, extending to Blodgett the arm upon which was the handcuff.

Blodgett hesitated.

"I doan' tek de fus step wid dem on," said Becky.

Blodgett unlocked the link and put the handcuffs in his pocket.

Becky consented to walk in front of him, as the two proceeded to the magistrate's office. Her hope was in the lawyer first, but chiefly in Dr. Quelch. But, whether one or the other failed or succeeded, she had no doubt whatever concerning her own purpose. If she should be turned over to Blodgett she would try to escape, and she felt confident Dr. Quelch would help her to escape; but if this were not possible, she was resolved to take her life.

When the office of the magistrate was reached, another hearing engaged the attention of the court, and there was delay for fully half-an-hour.

Major Gridley was there waiting for his client, and before the case was opened Dr. Quelch drove up to the door and came into the room.

Both of them talked with Becky. The major intended to do all that he could, within the boundaries of the law, to free the woman. Dr. Quelch proposed to give her freedom, if he could, without respect for the law.

He arranged that a man should hold his horse while the matter was pending, and he whispered to Becky that

if the case should go against her she should bolt, get in his carriage, and drive as fast as she could to the next station beyond his own on the Underground Railroad.

Blodgett and the Metcalfs of Aramingo were represented in this proceeding by Billy Grimes, a member of the Turley bar who combined intense political activity with the practice of his profession. He was the local boss, and the faithful, efficient servant of Colonel Bly, the boss who, without holding any official position, managed to govern the whole state.

When the case was called, Grimes explained to the magistrate that Becky Slifer was a runaway slave, the property of Mr. Metcalf of Aramingo, and that she had been in hiding in the home of Captain Bluit until Mrs. Metcalf, by accident, last summer discovered the woman's whereabouts. Now the owner of the property had sent Mr. Blodgett here to take possession of it, and Mr. Grimes had no doubt at all that the justice, representing the majesty of the law, would conclusively demonstrate, by handing Becky Slifer over to the representative of the owner, that the sacred rights of property are respected in this law-abiding community.

Mr. Blodgett, under oath, declared that he was Mr. Metcalf's agent, with due authority from him to arrest this woman, and to take her to her home, and he presented a letter, signed by Mr. Metcalf, empowering him to bring the woman back.

Mr. Grimes insisted that this closed the case, although he had confessed privately to Blodgett, only a few moments before the hearing began, that he feared Blodgett had no case, and he had permitted himself to convey to Blodgett that he considered Blodgett to be not any more fit than an infant to take care of any case, because Blodgett had neglected to confer with Grimes before he made a movement in the matter.

"Your honour," said Major Gridley, with the dignity and gravity that became a lawyer who ranked among the first in the state, "permit me to speak a word for my client here, this unfortunate woman. This man Blodgett has not even laid the foundation of a claim to

the right to seize her person. Who is this man? Nobody knows. He comes here with a letter purporting to be written by a certain Metcalf. But the letter may be forged; or this man may not be the Blodgett named in it; or Metcalf may not own any woman named Becky Slifer; or this woman may not bear that name. I know you too well, your honour, to suppose for a moment that you will employ your authority to hand over this woman, who is presumably a free woman, to this unknown man, to do what he will with her! Your honour, that kind of thing may be done sometimes in a slave state, but not here, sir, in a free state! Never! Never! Think of the dimensions of the wrong if this court, appointed to execute justice, should actually condemn a free woman to be sold into slavery, because some covetous ruffian has fancied that he would like to enrich himself by such a nefarious transaction! No, your honour; let us have, first, proof that Mr. Metcalf owns this woman and has a right to her, and then it will be time to consider what shall be done next. I move that this defendant be discharged."

"Rebecca Slifer, you are discharged," said the justice promptly.

"One moment," said Major Gridley, as Blodgett rose to withdraw. "Your honour, will you permit me to say further that, upon its face and for all we know to the contrary, the action of this man, alleged to be Blodgett, in forcing himself into Captain Bluitt's house and violently assailing this woman in an effort to manacle her, has the appearance of an attempt to kidnap a free black person. This is an offence of a very serious character in this state, and if it can be proved upon any one, the penalties are severe. I am informed by the friends of this woman that they intend to proceed against this assailant, and to have him put under bail upon the charge referred to, unless he shall leave the town within two hours, and I will take pains to see that the threat is made good."

Blodgett left the room with his counsel, who said to him when they reached the sidewalk:

"I told you you were a fool! Next time you want to consult me before you do anything."

"I'll have that nigger yet," said Blodgett.

"But you want to get sense first," replied Grimes, whose fee was in his pocket.

Major Gridley shook hands with Dr. Quelch, who shook hands with Becky, and as the major went back to his office, Dr. Quelch, standing upon the pavement by his buggy, said in a low tone to Becky:

"You had better come with me. They will try again to take you. Come with me, and I will give you work to do that you will like."

"I'se 'bleeged to you, Mister Quelch, werry much 'bleeged to you, but if you doan' min' I stays where I is twel dey try to meddle wid me agin. I'se not feared of 'em."

"Very well, Becky," said the doctor, getting into his buggy and gathering the lines into his hand, "do as you please, but I am afraid you'll regret not taking my advice."

When Rufus, who had observed the proceedings in the justice's court with much interest, heard the decision of the magistrate, he hurried home to bring the news to Miss Bluitt.

Captain Bluitt had returned, and after hearing from his sister the story of the contest in his kitchen, he had resolved to go to the magistrate's office to see if he could do anything to help Becky.

Rufus entered just as the captain was leaving the house.

"Well, Rufus?" he said.

"She's let go," he exclaimed. "The judge never gave Blodgett a show, and Major Gridley threatened to put him in jail."

"To put whom in jail?" asked Miss Bluitt.

"Blodgett. Said he was a kidnapper."

"And Becky is coming home again?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir, straight home. Well, Captain Bluitt, I never seen a woman fight like Becky! The way she

tackled that man! I'd rather fight a bear any time!"

"Very well, Rufus," said the captain. "That'll do."

"But, one moment," said Miss Bluit, as Rufus turned to leave the room. "Major Gridley told Blodgett he would arrest him, did he?"

"Yes'm; the major said he was a kidnapper, and he turned around and shook his finger at Blodgett, and told him to git out of the town. I seen him when he done it."

"Saw whom?"

"I seen the major shakin' his finger at Blodgett."

Miss Bluit sighed a sigh of relief, but she had a new trouble upon her mind. She said to Rufus, who stood over by the door, fumbling his hat:

"Rufus, you shouldn't say you seen him. The proper method of speaking is *saw*—'I saw him'—not when he *done* it, but when he *did* it."

"Yes'm, of course; that's when I did see him."

"You understand, do you?"

"Oh, yes! I understand."

"You know, Rufus, *seen* is the past participle of the verb to see, while what you want to use is the indicative mood, past tense of the verb; that is, 'I saw.' And in the same manner, *did* is the past tense, indicative mood of the verb to do. You must say 'when he did it,' not 'when he done it.'"

"Certainly, ma'm; that's just right."

"I heard you say yesterday to Hannah, Rufus, that you were sorry you went somewhere or other alone, and you used this painful expression:—'If I'd a knowed you'd a went, I'd a taken you along.'"

"Yes'm, that's what I said."

"Put, Rufus, that is dreadful. There is no such word as knowed."

"Isn't there, mum? Where did I ever get it from, then?"

"You should say *known*. 'If I had known.' To know is an irregular verb and the active voice, first person, singular number, subjunctive mood, past perfect

tense, is *had known*. 'If I had known you would have gone.'"

"Very strange, mum, isn't it?"

"Not at all, Rufus. 'You'd a went,' is quite impossible English. *Went* is the past tense of the verb *to go*, while *gone* is the past participle. Try to get the participles right."

"I see," said Rufus.

"Rufus reminds me," remarked Captain Bluit, "of the old Roman expression, *particeps criminis*—that is, he makes an almost criminal use of participles."

"Would and have in that sentence," continued Miss Bluit, "are auxiliaries used with *gone*, the participle. Now, Rufus, try to be more careful in the future in speaking, won't you? It is really painful to educated people to listen to such dreadful misuse of language."

"I'll try, mum," answered Rufus, "but you see I never had no schoolin' wuth speakin' of. I ain't never had no such show as you had, mum."

"Rufus!" exclaimed Miss Bluit. "There! you a doing worse than ever! You mean you have not had good opportunities. I know that, and I am very, very sorry for you. But really you *must* know that two negatives make an affirmative, don't you, Rufus?"

"No, mum; never heard of it before. I don't know what a negative is, even."

"He used three," interposed the captain. "The third one ought to bring it back to the negative, oughtn't it, Puella?"

"Negation, denial, the opposite of affirmation, of yes," said Miss Bluit to Rufus. "'Ain't never had no.' Three times you speak negatively. Once is enough. And there is no such word, Rufus, as *ain't*, though it is used sometimes for am not. You could not say 'I am not had an opportunity,' could you?"

"I might try, mum, but it would be very hard."

"Remember that *never* is an adverb, and opportunity is a common noun, third person, singular number, neuter gender, and objective case."

"Yes'm."

"You shou'd say 'I never had an opportunity,' not a 'show,' Rufus; and then *had* is the indicative mood, past tense of the transitive verb *to have*."

"Will you please say that again, mum? I don't quite get it."

"I will write it out for you, Rufus. Or, better still, I will lend you a grammar, and have Hannah go over it with you. Promise me that you will study it."

"Very well, mum."

As Rufus withdrew, literally saturated with syntax, and with his head not perfectly clear as to what really was the matter with his parts of speech, Miss Bluitt arose and went to the kitchen to welcome Becky upon her return, while Captain Bluitt resumed the reading of the third volume of Plutarch's Lives.

CHAPTER XII

TEMPTATION

MCGANN'S electric motor as a matter of fact actually at last did go ; and this really seemed not unimportant, for a motor that refuses to go surely lacks one of the essentials of efficiency.

Just how long it would go, and how fast it would go, and what the cost would be of making it go, were matters yet to be conclusively determined ; but the judge had a right to feel much encouraged by the measure of success that had attended his efforts, and to claim that if the soundness of his theories had this much experimental demonstration, he was warranted in believing that further application of his inventive powers would enable him to bring the motor somewhere near to perfection.

The judge liked to exhibit to his friends, particularly those who might have money to invest, the device in operation ; but he was judicious enough to retain in his own mind the principles upon which he had constructed the motor, and the details of the various appliances. He had secured no patents, for the excellent reason that the funds required for that purpose were not at that moment available. His hope was either to find a partner who had capital, or to organize a company which should undertake the task of promoting the new invention.

One of his visitors was John Hamilton, cashier of the bank, whose connection with a financial institution was

supposed by McGann to give him important and influential relations with capitalists, and, besides, to the mind of McGann, whose fiscal operations, conducted single-handed, had always issued in disaster, there was something imposing in the very presence of a man whose business was to deal in money, and who was an officer of a highly successful financial institution.

Hamilton came to the studio by invitation, and with some curiosity to see a device of which he had heard not a little from various people, who had been impressed by the very large claims made for the motor by McGann himself.

At the time of the cashier's visit, he and the inventor had the studio to themselves. On that day the motor was really in fine condition. It started when the switch was turned; all the belts and wires gave good service, the reciprocating crank did its very best, the oil-cups dripped with decision, and the engine and the petrification out in the shed which passed for a boiler, responded efficiently to every demand made upon them.

There could be no doubt about it. McGann not only generated electricity, but he had contrived so as to apply the subtle power thus produced as to give powerful impetus to a separate machine.

John Hamilton's mind was quick enough to perceive at once, without suggestion from the inventor, some of the possibilities thus indicated, but McGann could not resist the impulse to speak upon a subject about which he had been thinking and dreaming for many months.

"You see, Mr. Hamilton," he said, "that the thing moves; not slowly or reluctantly, but with high speed. There is energy behind it, strong, potential force, equal to almost any duty you can impose upon it.

"All you do see, however, is this wheel going round and round without accomplishing anything but revolution. But, Mr. Hamilton, imagine if you can what that will mean when the force shall be applied to practical uses!

"You can generate the force here in this room with

this steam-engine, but you can carry it upon a wire out over any reasonable distance, and apply it to the propulsion of vehicles or of machinery. That means, first of all, that you will live to see the day when cars and carriages will run without locomotives or horses, and run with velocity that can be increased clear up to the outside edge of safety.

"Yes, sir; this machine means death to the locomotive and the cheapening, and therefore the great multiplication of methods of transportation."

"It looks like that," said Hamilton.

"More than that: I have used a steam-engine to produce the electrical force, because the engine is handy. I could just as well have employed water-power, if I had had one within reach. Another result of the invention, therefore, must be to give new value to every water-power, great and small, in the country, with reduction in such cases of the cost of running the motor. If I can succeed, as I think I can, in conveying the power over considerable distances without sensible loss, you may put your mill or your factory in the town and operate it with power that is away off yonder in those hills, so the mill can remain near to the people and the railroad, while having all the advantages of proximity to natural sources of power."

"That appears reasonable, at any rate," said Hamilton.

"Yes, and I believe I can also use this electrical current for producing light. I have not experimented in that direction yet, for various reasons. For one thing, I know I shall have trouble to perfect a satisfactory kind of burner; but if I don't do it, you may depend some other man will find a way to transform that energy into light, and to give to street-illumination such splendour as will make gas-lamps appear ridiculous."

"And you want money to work with, don't you?"

"It didn't require much ingenuity to guess that. I haven't enough to buy fuel for my boiler. For two weeks I have been burning my fence-palings. I can't afford to pay for my patents, and I owe more than I like to think of for all this machinery, much of which

I was not able to make for myself—hadn't the necessary tools."

"Your idea is to sell part of your patent-rights?"

"Yes, sir. I'll go halves in the invention with any good man who will put up the money I must have."

"How much?"

"Well, to pay all I owe, and to start the thing anywhere near right, I should get at least ten thousand dollars."

"It is a big sum."

"Yes, I know, but if this thing is once presented to the public for inspection, you can more than double your money."

"Better sell it to a company," said Hamilton.

"Exactly! The two owners could form a company, selling enough stock for cash to make them comfortable, and holding the remainder on a ground-floor basis to permit them to have control. Mr. Hamilton, I don't have to tell a man like you that it will make us both rich."

"Certainly it looks promising. Yes, I like the look of it, McGann. I will think the thing over, and see if I can get the money for you. I understand that you will hold it open till you hear from me?"

"Very well, if you say so."

"I will let you know within a few days. But do not say to any one, please, that I have the matter in hand."

Hamilton took another look at the motor, bade farewell to the elated inventor, and went away.

As he walked slowly towards his home, he considered if he should not try to discover some method by which he could acquire a share in the assured profits of McGann's manifestly wonderful invention.

He had long been dissatisfied with the unpromising condition of his circumstances. In the bank he was surrounded by men who had acquired wealth in greater and less degrees. He heard their talk, he witnessed their manifest satisfaction with their success; he was familiar with the nature of some of their triumphant ventures; he knew the dimensions of their bank accounts,

and it seemed to him, as he regarded the men themselves, that they were not in any particular his superiors.

When, at the directors' meetings, they diverged sometimes from the business before them, and discussed their large private enterprises, the cashier had a feeling that he was neglected; that there was a charmed circle into which he could not enter; that some of the men had a certain measure of disdain in their attitude towards him, as if these were matters that of course he could have no interest in.

This feeling, born of his imagination, produced vexation and anger. His salary seemed pitiful compared with the sums spent by these men, and fully known to him—and the salary became no larger—whilst one of the most familiar incidents of the board meetings was the boastful reference by one or the other of the members to lucky ventures that had been made.

If he should die, he reflected, his wife and daughter would have almost nothing. When the salary stopped, the dwelling-house alone would remain. What would become of that delicate mother and of the daughter? He could not bear to think of the girl flung out into the rough world to make her way; and what could she find to do that would give to her bread enough for mother and child?

This thought had been often in his mind as he grew older, and as other men of his years passed away, some of them suddenly, just as he might go. There was some hope that the fair girl might marry where there was wealth; but nobody that seemed at all suitable in that and other particulars could be perceived in or anywhere near to Turley, and the chance was always present that Dorry might fancy a poor man, and so, perhaps, make the fortune of the family worse rather than better.

With this praiseworthy solicitude for the welfare of his dear ones, there came to him sometimes an ignoble feeling of bitterness as he contrasted his own situation with that of some of his neighbours. The most prosperous people lived upon the street overlooking the river—"the Bank" was the phrase employed to designate

the locality—and there were in Hamilton's mind very often some traces of envy of those who were able to live in the favoured neighbourhood. He would have been half ashamed to admit to himself that he had such a sentiment, but it was there, and now and then it was intensified as he walked along the river street and saw the handsome houses, or watched the vehicles drawn by fine horses dashing by him, or halting to take up the rich folks who lived there.

His fate was to walk, or to drive his wife and daughter out sometimes in a rather shabby hired wagon, which really seemed shabbier and less respectable than it was when he encountered some of his neighbours riding in their elegant equipages.

Yes, he was dissatisfied. His house was pretty and comfortable, and not very small, and his garden was lovely in the summer-time; but the house was not on the Bank, and the rooms would have been so much nicer if they had been larger, and the furniture was rather worn; and upon the whole it seemed to him that Fate had not been fair to him. He should have the same kind of opportunities that come to other men.

Did it not really appear as he looked at McGann's motor that one had come, at last, to him?

So far as he could perceive, in his ignorance of mechanical things, the motor fulfilled all the requirements of such a device, and looking at the promise afforded by its operation—looking at it dispassionately—there seemed no reason for doubting that it would accomplish all the large results indicated by McGann in his talk. He knew men who had gone into enterprises not nearly so hopeful as this one, and had become rich. If he refused McGann's offer, or if he were unable to accept it, he felt sure some other man would invest in the project. Then he would spend the rest of his life, still upon a salary, still in his narrow home, in regretting that he had not been bold enough to launch his ship while the tide for once—only once—was at the flood.

"The difference," he said to himself, "between the man who succeeds and the man who misses success, as

I have done, is, after all, that one has courage to accept risks while the other is a coward. Anybody can invest in certainties, but the brave man must take chances when the prize is great."

He allowed his imagination to play with the possibilities of exploitation of the motor. It was not worth while to employ any figures, but he could see the money rolling in for him, and for McGann. The company would want a financial officer, and he would fill the place, at a large salary, a very large salary, considering that the company would be rich; and he would sit there, not a hired man to take orders; but as one of the largest stockholders to give orders, to shape policies, to put a masterful hand to the business that should be done.

He would build a large house on the Bank, and drive his own horses, and keep a man and several house-servants and do many other things that he had been wanting all his life to do.

Then the thought came to him that this kind of longing did not harmonize very well with some of the lessons he had been teaching of late to the young men in his Bible class at the Presbyterian church. He remembered how impressive he had been in his explanation that the rich fool in the parable was indeed a fool, and in urging the young men not to worship Mammon. He was startled for a moment as he observed the sharp difference between his doctrine and the present condition of his own mind; "but," he said, "after all a man must in some degree look out for himself; and, anyhow, those theories about rich men appear to be a good deal strained. There have been plenty of really pious men of large wealth; and besides, I will have a chance to help the church, and to help poor people far beyond anything that I now have."

But how to get the money? Ah! that is the question. It is not worth while to go a-dreaming. As usual, at the very outset, the cash consideration presents itself, hard and stubborn. The one requirement of the situation is—the money.

Part of the sum required could be had, he thought, by

putting a mortgage on his house. He could easily carry the interest until the dividends of the motor company began to come in. But, he thought again, part of the money is not enough, and then the house belonged to his wife. He dreaded to present this speculative enterprise to her. Somehow he felt that it would not appear to her mind to be as alluring as it seemed to him. Women are so timid, so unused to business, so emotional until they have to deal with money, and then so cold and practical, and short-sighted, too!

No, the mortgage plan would not do.

Perhaps he could borrow upon his own note from some of his rich acquaintances—Captain Bluitt, for example. But upon reflection it appeared unlikely that they would consent to risk so much in a venture of such a kind without outright security; and, if he should present the proposition to a friend, the friend might step in and make the investment for himself.

Why not simply take the money from the bank?

Hamilton was conscious that that thought had been lurking somewhere in the recesses of his mind from the beginning, but he had tried to suppress it, to keep it back, to hide it even from his own contemplation; but now, when it thrust itself forcibly to the surface, he felt his heart leap, and his face redden, and his whole nature thrill with the violence of the shock.

He clenched his hands, and set his teeth, and started to walk more rapidly.

"No!" he said. "No! not that! Let me get rid at once of that notion. That is madness!"

He pushed the thought away from him, and believed that he had parted with it finally. He became calmer; but as his mind was tranquillized he found the suggestion forcing itself upon him again. It seemed to come up in spite of his strong effort and desire to keep it submerged.

"Suppose we examine it, anyhow? No harm can be done by simply looking at the project.

"That money can be taken, without the smallest risk of detection, five thousand dollars at a time. It will

make me rich. Then I can put it back, with absolutely no harm to anybody, for I will find some method of paying interest to the bank, and so I will have no stain upon my hands or my conscience. I will endeavour to eliminate risk. I will not pay a dollar to McGann until I know that the motor will do what he says it will do; and if it will do that, there can be no risk, and the money can be returned without the shadow of a doubt.

"Besides, have I not laboured and toiled for that bank year in and year out, for a very insufficient compensation? I have made by my skill much of the money that has been made."

He began to encourage a sense of injustice, and to dwell upon and magnify the wrong that had been done to him.

"I don't intend to steal the money, but simply to use for a time a part of the gains of my own effort, and then to replace the entire sum with interest."

Then the cashier permitted his fancy to consider again the picture he had framed in his mind, of the finer house on the river-bank, of the easy, independent life, of the increased importance he would have in the community, always more deferential to the man of wealth.

Thus he thought until he came to his home, and entered, and found his wife sitting in the inner room sewing. It seemed as if suddenly he had plunged into a new atmosphere—a new world. He was like a man roused from heavy sleep.

His wife greeted him gently and he kissed her; and as he did so the plan upon which he meditated seemed hideous and dreadful. Somehow the tender influences of home impelled him away from the conclusions to which his selfishness and pride were driving him.

The matter still lingered in his mind during the hour before dinner while he chatted with his wife and with Dorothea when she came in fresh and rosy from a walk with Mrs. Burns; but he was almost rid of it when dinner was over, and with a feeling that he may have escaped danger, came unusual cheerfulness, which wife and daughter observed with pleasure and responded to.

Later in the evening he began, as was his custom, to read the evening paper. There seems to be a kind of fatality about such things. Why, when you have the inflammable material in your mind, is the spark always flying in that direction?

The first thing that caught the cashier's eye was the narrative of a bold speculative venture made by a man in New York, who pocketed half a million dollars without turning his hand. This set Hamilton's brain afire: afire with the covetousness and envy which were ready to blaze upward at such a suggestion.

In another part of the paper was the synopsis of a lecture by a scientific man connected with a governmental institution in Washington, suggesting that the greatest mechanical achievements of the concluding half of the century would be made along the line of electrical invention. The lecturer predicted that enormous fortunes would be gained by the men who should follow the success of the electric telegraph with applications of electricity to locomotion and lighting.

Hamilton could hardly restrain his lips from uttering exclamations as he read these things. The lecturer seemed to be speaking to him directly, to urge him to take any risk, that he might be among the first to reap the rich harvest that was soon to be gathered.

But he must not permit himself, in the presence of his family, to dwell upon the subject. He put the journal by, resolved to take it up again in the morning, and then he forced himself to speak to his wife of domestic and social and other matters of commonplace.

While the father set snares for himself, and appeared likely to close his eyes to almost certain consequences which had destroyed more than one man he had known, and hundreds of whom he heard, the daughter, happy in the home which seemed to her to have no shadows, and in the glow of the passion that is most delicious, followed, by means of letters from Walter, the course of his quick advancement. Once or twice in the winter he had found opportunity to run down to Turley for a short visit, or to spend a Sunday upon which he could

go to church and hear the very best singing in the whole world; but he wrote quite often, and mailed marked copies of his paper; and the girl learned with pleasure tinged with pride that he was acquiring some reputation as a public speaker.

Walter had always felt that he could speak well if he should have right opportunity. A depressed and afflicted world long ago learned that this belief sometimes is held by men in whom it assumes the character of a strong delusion; but Walter's first attempts, marred somewhat as they were by the nervousness and incompleteness of inexperience, demonstrated to him and to his hearers that his conviction that he possessed talent as a speaker was well founded.

Exercise of the gift gave him almost as much pleasure as he found in writing, and he soon discovered that the demand for his oratory was eager enough to supply him with abundant opportunity to improve his powers by practice.

He went upon the stump for the first time in the spring campaign, and was received by the Whig voters with so much approbation that the party managers looked upon him as a man upon whom they should depend in the future for larger and severer campaign work.

These triumphs filled him with delight, and added to his confidence. There would have been peril indeed that so much success and so much praise should have stimulated his vanity beyond the point of reasonableness, had he not possessed sturdy good sense, which permitted him to take in some degree the measure of the value of popular applause.

What he cared for most were the words of appreciation that came from Turley; from his uncle and aunt, who were exultant that he should have developed power for which there was no precedent at all in the family; and from the gentle girl, who was deeply gratified, but not surprised that glory should come to him of whom she thought that he deserved far more than he would be likely ever to receive.

Tempted by repeated invitations, Walter made a light venture into the lecture-field. He chose for his first attempt a church in a country-town miles away from the great city, and if he did not win a shining victory, the failure to do so may be attributed rather to unfavourable circumstances—chiefly to the character of his audience—than to his unfitness for the task.

A good while afterwards he wrote and published an account of this experiment, which was not without its humorous aspects. He confessed that the theme had been suggested to his mind by the idols which ranged themselves upon Uncle Bluitt's mantelpiece.

Perhaps the narrative, read by Dorothea Hamilton with interest, may be worthy of a place in these pages which tell something of the fortunes of the youth.

LARES AND PENATES.

I had no especial desire to lecture for the benefit of the Fourth Brick Church, but one of the deacons entreated me to do so, and as I had a lecture written upon the general subject of "Home," with the title "Lares and Penates," I consented to deliver it, without any fee, in the chapel adjoining the church.

As nothing was charged for admission, the purpose being to take up a collection, the room was quite two-thirds full. I took my seat in a chair upon the platform, and presently was introduced to the pastor, upon whom devolved the duty of presenting me to the audience. The good man approached the performance of his task with a rather discouraging air of deep solemnity. He said, in effect, that while innocent amusement ought to be encouraged, he questioned the propriety of using it as a means of getting money for the church. He confessed to a serious apprehension that the forthcoming discourse was of rather a frivolous nature. For his part he had opposed the scheme of having the lecture, but he had been overruled, and now he wished it to be understood that he washed his hands of the whole business. Then he invited me to come forward.

I began the discourse, and for about five minutes I got along, I thought, quite well. Then I heard some one snoring. It was a snore expressive of deep, intense, satisfying peace. Each snore was long-drawn, profound, and sonorous. The sleeper manifestly was experiencing the most serene repose. The sound annoyed me exceedingly. It seemed a reflection upon my discourse. After enduring it for awhile I caught the eye of a man on the front bench, and by nodding and contracting the muscles of my face indicated that I wished him to rouse the sleeper. He arose and went over to the snoring man and carefully examined him. Then, without disturbing him, he came to the edge of the platform and whispered to me :

"He seems pretty comfortable. Do you want him for anything in particular?"

I thought perhaps it would be better to let the matter drop.

There were directly in front of me a young man and a girl who were evidently lovers. I saw him furtively squeezing her hand two or three times, and he became conscious that I was looking at him. He then folded his arms, and fixing his gaze upon me with an air of deep interest in the lecture, he began to feel for her foot with his. Even with my eyes upon the manuscript I could see that young man's foot pushing out to the right and sweeping all about in search for her foot. She seemed to have it tucked away far under the bench, for he could not encounter it, although he sat forward on the very edge of his seat and thrust his foot underneath, until I was really afraid he would lose his balance and tumble over upon the floor. But he looked steadfastly at me during the entire operation, although his face was somewhat distorted by his exertions.

The platform was lighted only by a gas-bracket upon the wall at the rear of the desk, and I had some difficulty in reading my manuscript, so after getting through with twenty or thirty pages, I stopped and asked that the janitor, if he were present, would turn up the gas a little bit. The janitor attempted to do so, but he turned the

key the wrong way and put the gas out. At once I heard a noise near to me as of a kiss, and I felt that the young man had begun to improve his splendid opportunities. All the Sunday School boys in the room whistled vehemently upon their fingers, and it was with difficulty that the good pastor could be heard urging that the best thing to do would be to adjourn. A deacon, however, protested that the collection had not been taken up, and that it would be little short of madness to dismiss the audience. Then the janitor crept upon the platform, and asked me to lend him a match, and in a few minutes we had the gas lighted and were ready for a fresh start. The man who snored slept sweetly and snored evenly all through the period of excitement. He seemed to enjoy himself thoroughly.

Then I came to the most pathetic and impressive passage in my lecture, and in the very midst of it the snoring man suddenly awoke and began to applaud. The audience joined him feebly, excepting that the young man on the front bench clapped his hands vigorously, possibly for the purpose of diverting my attention from the fact that his foot was resting at last lovingly upon hers.

But there was no applause when I read my concluding paragraph, and withdrew to the chair at the back of the platform. People seemed to feel relieved. One deacon took his stand at the door, and two others started up the aisle with the collection-baskets. They began with me. Both came up and held their baskets at me, and I could not well avoid dropping something in one, for the whole audience was looking at me. One of the deacons before leaving me, said:

"I thought it was going to be a humorous lecture."

While the collection was taking, the pastor rose and said he felt it would not be right to permit the opportunity to pass to answer, upon the spot, the argument advanced by the lecturer of the evening in favour of polygamy.

I interrupted him to say that he had mistaken my meaning. I had not favoured polygamy. What I said

was, that the law which gives a widow a third of her late husband's property could not operate where there were four widows of one man. It was, I said, a kind of jest.

But the pastor, without deigning to look at me, went on to say that the most insidious kinds of evil are sometimes disguised as jests, and then he proceeded to free his mind at much length.

When he had concluded, the people walked silently out, turning their heads occasionally to look at me and to whisper the results of their observation. Nobody thanked me, and I walked down-stairs in a sullen, gloomy frame of mind.

In the street I passed two men who were talking. One of them who had not been at the entertainment asked the other what the lecture was about, and he responded:

"Oh, I dunno; somethin' or nuther 'bout tares and peanuts."

CHAPTER XIII

EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES IN TURLEY

IN a town so small as Turley, it was unavoidable that every citizen should have contact and acquaintance with all sorts and conditions of men in a manner that would have been unlikely, if not quite impossible, in a great city.

A word or a phrase not yet prepared is much needed to designate with precision the class-differences that appear in an American town under such circumstances. The differences of social station and of education are there, manifest and indisputable; but they cannot be fairly indicated if the humble and less learned folk are called the common people, though there is good Scriptural warrant for that phrase, because some of these people would regard the term as offensive, and the persons who should not be included in it would be shame-faced about seeming to convey an intimation that they feel themselves to be uncommon. It will not do to speak of the upper classes, or the superior classes, or the more respectable classes, because these terms also are unkind and often unjust. Among the common people of Turley, if that phrase may be used just once, were many men and women of really superior worth to some of those who claimed higher position; and there were persons of wealth in the town who were indisputably vulgar, while some persons without wealth, and in the narrowest circumstances, possessed genuine refinement.

To speak of those in the humble place as plain people may serve the purpose, until the language is enriched by the invention of a more accurate designation ; and yet if Turley society should be divided into classes, and one class should be said to include the plain people, in what manner should the characteristic qualities of the other class be indicated ?

Necessarily, in Turley, the people of all classes were compelled to know each other. They lived in the same neighbourhoods, they passed upon the street, often many times a day. They worshipped and worked in the same churches. They belonged to the same church and benevolent societies, and indeed they often helped one another in various ways.

Having such acquaintance and such contact, and such common interest, class-feeling and class-prejudice were much softened, if indeed they were not wholly imperceptible. Men and women in each class perceived in men and women of the other classes just about the same virtues, the same old human nature with its frailties and faults and loveliness, as they had themselves, and they found that the ancient law of kindness could work downward as well as upward, and was sure of quick response in whichever direction it worked.

A close observer of the Turley folk declared that he was sure the poorer did not, as a rule, envy the richer very much. The poor man who worked hard and lived in a little house, and had heavy anxiety about the day when he should be disabled, might feel sometimes that his life would be brighter if his toil were lighter. And his mansion wider and his savings larger ; but usually he found the wealthier man quick to lend a hand when trouble came to the unlucky neighbour, and he perceived that in the wide house, too, there were heavy burdens to be borne—burdens of sorrow and sickness, and sometimes the bitterness of death.

This close observer reached the conclusion that the humbler man with the calloused hand and grimed visage usually found his situation fairly tolerable, if the other man would consent always to give to him the best

courtesy he could command. He could endure plain food, and a narrow house, and a threadbare coat, and neglect to invite him to social functions, if his prosperous and more learned neighbour would always treat him like a gentleman. Really this did not seem much to ask; and the expectation was quite as creditable to the man who entertained it, as disregard of so proper a wish would have been discreditable to the man who claimed to be a gentleman.

Down at the bottom of the humbler man's soul was a desire that his self-respect should have some tribute; and besides, he did have, whether he framed the thought in words or not, a perfectly warrantable conviction that his manhood had claims to recognition, whether upon the ground that all of us are God's creatures, or upon the ground, more plainly apparent to the unspiritual mind, that a citizen with all the political rights that any man can have, has a title of respect from a citizen who stands in that particular upon an exactly equal footing with him.

If the closer observer should have taken the trouble to look a little more closely, he might have found that, lurking in the minds of some of the humbler men, there was really a feeling of superiority to men of the other class. Clearly there was no looking up in reverence. But there was, in the first place, the sense of greater power, born of the fact that the humbler people, having a majority in all the political parties, absolutely controlled the government of the town; and out of this feeling developed a sort of conviction that the persons having control, really should look after and take care of the people who had no power to protect themselves, who did not know practical politics, and who were wholly unable to manage the more turbulent elements of the population, especially where political affairs were concerned.

Anybody who should have made a resolute effort to determine just where the dividing line ran between the upper and lower classes in Turley might have found it, perhaps, indicated by the speech of the people. The

man who used precision in speaking and paid attention to the rules of syntax and avoided slang, appeared to many of his humbler neighbours to draw the line for himself. He might be a thoroughly good fellow, but plainly enough, he was disposed to differentiate himself from the bone and sinew of the people, and he might even be suspected of having a touch of pride.

At any rate, his accuracy appeared to reflect in a measure upon the plain man who was incorrect and careless in speech. To the man who always said, "We ain't went," the other man who said, "We have not gone," seemed to be straining the language to the point of affectation; to be taking a good deal of trouble, and making an unnecessary fuss about a very trifling thing.

The man who never rose above "I seen him when he done it" could not quite understand why another man should engage in the effort required to say "I saw him when he did it"; and indeed he regarded him with a light feeling of scorn. It looked rather like an attempt to soar above the common dead-level, and to put the plain man in the wrong.

The plain man sometimes knew he was wrong when he said, "I knowed;" but "I knowed," and "I seen him," and "I done it" were good enough for ordinary people; they had a familiar, friendly, good-fellowship air about them; they flavoured of genuine republicanism, that puts equality in the first place, and holds that one man is as good as another.

If one man is as good as another in political matters, why, then, one man's method of speech should be as good as another's; and rules of grammar, even if we know them, are not half so important as the duty of meeting the plain man upon his own ground, without attempting to show him that you know any more than he does.

It was an ingenious suggestion made by Mr. Brown, principal of the public school, that, as the dividing line between the classes was indicated by correct and incorrect speech, the two sets of people might be called the

parsables and the imparsables; but this notion had never been accepted in actual practice.

In Turley, the politicians and the people did not look about them in election-time for the wisest business men to conduct the town's affairs in the local legislature; nor did they seek the citizens having the highest education and the widest information to direct the business of the public schools. The plain people had the majority in both parties, and the sure method of pleasing the majorities was to choose for the places men who knew no more and pretended to know no more than the average voter. Men of this kind were pleased to have the honour that came from holding office, and the voters were pleased to have men of their own sort in office, and, more than all, pleased to demonstrate year after year that they actually had control. Like most Americans, they felt certain that they could manage the governmental affairs as well as anybody could. A strange fate had excluded them from directing the mills and railroads and great shops; but they would prove by directing public business that this exclusion was not a reflection upon their capacity, but a mere freak of fortune.

It was enough to exclude any man from the town council that he managed a large business of his own successfully; but if this rule might sometimes be broken when the treasury of the town got its affairs into a tangle, the practice was unvarying which refused to permit any man to go upon the school-board who could tell an adverb from an interjection, or could "bound" Indiana when suddenly asked to do so.

Acquaintance with a dead language was regarded with particular distrust. The feeling was that there was about such a language something mysterious and sinister, and that the man who had the knowledge in his mind had come into touch with something foreign and un-American; and, beneath such unpatriotic influences, might at any moment drift off into hostility to the old flag and hatred of the eagle.

"When a language is dead, bury it, I say!" remarked

the president of the school-board at the meeting where the principal had proposed to introduce the study of Latin to the schools.

The board refused even to consider the matter.

This was one reason why Captain Bluitt was not permitted to find a place in the school-board.

The people did not complain that he was rich, or that he was childless. They liked him because his manner was hearty, and his grammar disposed to looseness. But the fact that he was known to like the Romans, and to entertain a fondness for—even to make some reckless adventures into—their language, created prejudice against him.

"The American language," said Mr. Matlack, chairman of the school-committee on higher education, "ought to be good enough for any man."

The Turley school-board at all times was an interesting object for contemplation, by persons who desired to study the operation of the machinery devised by the state government for directing the business connected with the instruction of the young.

It was never more interesting than during the time of which this tale is told. Mr. Brown, the principal, thought that one of the most enlivening meetings of the board held in that period was that following his introduction of a plaster bust of Dante to the main school-room.

When the regular business of the meeting had been disposed of, Mr. Bunner remarked to the president that as the principal of the schools was present, he should like to ask him a question or two respecting some matters that had attracted Mr. Bunner's attention.

The president invited the principal to come forward, which he did, and when the principal had expressed willingness to offer any explanations that might be desired, Mr. Bunner said:

"It is possibly not a thing of much importance, but I notice that the principal, or somebody, has placed the bust of an Indian, or at least it looks like an Indian, on the shelf in the main school-room. Has the principal some notion of teaching the children about Indians?"

"That," said the principal, blandly, "is the bust of Dante; not of an Indian."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Bunner, "I thought it was the head of Tecumseh. It looks like him anyhow."

"I notice," said the president, "that you call him Dante. I don't know much about him, but I always thought his name was Dant."

"Dant-e," replied the principal. "With the *e* pronounced like *a*."

"Wrote poetry, or something, didn't he?" asked the president.

"He was an Italian poet: a very great man."

"Wasn't he a Roman Catholic?" inquired Mr. Matlack. Mr. Matlack was a member of the Know Nothing party, and he was haunted night and day by the conviction that the main purpose of the Pope's life was to undermine the foundations of the American Republic.

"Well," said the principal, "I suppose, perhaps, he was. You know at that time there was no other——"

"Yes, I know," replied Mr. Matlack. "I know well enough. They push in everywhere. First a bust, and next one thing, and then another thing. I'm opposed to it. I'd like to know who's behind this matter of putting the bust into the school."

"I take the responsibility," said the principal. "I thought that as he was a famous man and a great poet, we might have his likeness before the older children."

"That's the way it always begins," said Mr. Matlack, looking as if the Republic were already lost. "Give them an inch to begin with, and they'll take an ell."

"I don't believe the taxpayers want the children taught poetry anyhow," said Mr. Bunner. "What they want is just a plain, practical education, unless I'm mistaken. The children had a good deal better be learning figgers and spellin', than lookin' at Dant, in my opinion."

"While the principal is here," said Director Robinson, "I should like to ask what is this metric system that I find some of the children trying to learn?"

The principal explained the metric system.

"Nothing to do with hymns, with long metre and short metre, and hallelujah metres?" asked Director Robinson, who sang in the Baptist choir.

The principal said it had not.

"Did I understand you to say," inquired Mr. Matlack, "that the system came from France?"

"Yes," responded the principal.

"There's another queer move!" said Mr. Matlack, with strong emphasis. "You start in with an Italian poet, Dant, and then you fetch along a French system with names nobody can understand, and after awhile I reckon you'll be flying the British flag in the front-yard and singing 'God save the Queen.' There's a good deal too much foreign influence. The despotisms of Europe are getting a foothold. This country's good enough for me. I'm an American, and this is an American school. I say fly the American flag, and sing American songs, and have American systems, and shove the foreigners out. We can run our own business. Why don't you get a bust of General Washington?"

Director Ferguson asked if he might be permitted to interrogate the principal, and having obtained permission he said:

"Don't you think we are going just a little too fast?"

"In what particular?" inquired the principal.

"Well, in putting in this metric system, just at this time, for example."

"I think myself," interposed the president, "that the movement is somewhat premature."

"And then," continued Director Ferguson, "I found my boy last night rassling with algebra, and nearly crying over it. I told him to drop it, and I'd have it dropped in the school if I run the school. I never knowed no algebra, and I'll be satisfied if my boy makes out as well as I did."

The principal attempted briefly to indicate the nature and purposes of algebra.

"That's all very well, Mr. Brown," said Director Ferguson. "It's your business, of course, to care for such

things, but we're a practical people, with no nonsense about us. Figgers is for figgerin', and letters is for letterin'. There's no use of trying to figger with letters while there's plenty of figgers to figger with. Now is there?"

"You see——" began the principal.

"I don't care to argue about it," said Mr. Ferguson, interrupting him, "but the fact is, you can't any more substract *a* from *b*, like my boy was tryin' to do last night, than you can substract the dinner-bell from the poker. It ain't in the nature of things."

The principal did not reply.

"My boy also says," continued Mr. Ferguson, "that his teacher won't allow him to say knowed. Why not?"

"Knowed?" asked the principal. "K-n-o-w-e-d?"

"Yes, knowed. He says the teacher tried to make him say knew."

"Of course," said the principal. "Know, knew. That's right; there is no such word as knowed."

"I guess there is," answered Director Ferguson, with a scornful laugh.

"I guess so too," echoed Mr. Matlack, "and it's a good deal better to say 'knowed,' than to be putting Dant up on the shelf and bringing the children's minds under European influences."

"'Knowed' is not good English," said the principal.

"Maybe not," said Mr. Matlack, "but it's good American, and that's the best there is."

"You say mowed," asked Mr. Ferguson, "and rowed, and show, showed, and stow, stowed, and glow, glowed, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then, you say know, knowed, and grow, growed, and hoe, hoed."

And Director Ferguson tipped back his chair, and looked around him like a man who has just won a great victory.

The principal gazed at the ceiling.

"Now that we are on these subjects," said the president, "Mr. Brown will pardon me if I bring up another

EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES IN TURLEY 209

little matter. I don't want to push him too hard, but——"

"Oh, go ahead! It's all right," said the principal.

"I've had complaints from some parents," said the president, "about this mythology that's been put into the course of studies."

"What did they complain of?" asked the principal.

"Well, John Folker said to me that he understood that the whole thing is a pack of lies. Is that so?"

"Well, of course it's not exactly true," responded the principal. "It represents the beliefs of ancient peoples respecting——"

"It's all false, then?" asked Director Ferguson.

"I suppose you might say that, but——"

"No buts about it, Mr. Brown. If it's false it's false. Why should we teach children false things, when there is so much truth that they ought to know?"

"The characters of mythology," said the principal, "run through all literature, ancient and modern. They are referred to everywhere, so that we can hardly understand the most frequent references, in poetry, for example, unless we know these characters."

"That's what I say—drop poetry," remarked Mr. Bunner.

"Mythology," said the principal, "represents the religion of the old Greeks, and it has a historical interest, apart from its other interests."

"Came from Greece, did you say?" asked Mr. Matlack.

"Yes."

Mr. Matlack forced his hands violently down deep into his trousers-pockets and scowled.

"Italian and French and Greek! The whole school just jammed full of foreign influences! The next thing you know, we'll have Russia taking a hand and Turkey. Greek religion, too, mind you! Dant to start with, with the Pope behind him, and now Greek religion that owns up to being just bare-faced lies! Blamed if those children 'll know whether they're Americans or not, when they've growed up."

The remarkable fact was that the Turley public schools were very good schools indeed, for the reason that the principal was a competent man, and the teachers could not secure appointment unless they should pass examinations conducted by the county superintendent, also a competent man, who directed and largely controlled the line of study that was pursued.

The functions of the board were rather closely confined to management of the financial business of the schools, and fairness requires the admission that this was very well done.

Besides the public schools, there were in Turley other educational influences of no small importance, such as the Star Lecture Course, which had renewed popular favour every succeeding winter; the two young men's literary societies; the Science Club, with a membership including all the sceptics and persons who had really soaring intellects; the Garrick Dramatic Society, composed of young men and young women, who presented in a charming manner light dramas for the entertainment of Turley, and the cooking school that held sessions all through the cold weather.

But, in fact, the impression prevailed among the members that altogether the foremost educational influence in that part of the state, if not of the nation, was the Women's General Culture Club, composed of women of the best social standing, and having for its purpose (to state the fact in simplest terms) the consideration of anything that would tend to enrich and cultivate Mind.

Mrs. Frobisher was the zealous and active president of this important organization, and there can be no doubt that its place of meeting was an intellectual centre of immense value in helping Turley to keep itself abreast with the forward movement of the Thought of the world.

No report of one meeting of this august body could give any notion of the advanced character of its discussions and its work, and from the mass of valuable papers prepared by the secretary, and printed in the volumes entitled *Transactions*, it may be well to select certain

EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCES IN TURLEY 211

of the minutes which show in what manner the Culture Society was accustomed to deal with matters not absolutely intellectual.

The meeting to which reference was made was held late in January, and it was largely attended.

President Frobisher in the chair.

Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The treasurer's report was read and approved.

The president, in opening the session, expressed deep regret that the illness of Mrs. Dubois forbade her to be present to read the paper prepared by her, at the special request of the president, upon the subject of the Higher Intellectual Life, which had excited a discussion of so interesting a nature at the last meeting. She felt disinclined to take up the matter during the present session, for she felt confident Mrs. Dubois would be in attendance next week, when full consideration could be given to the theme.

In the absence of any important regular business, the president thought she might perhaps be permitted to direct the attention of the society to a communication received by her yesterday from the secretary of the Women's Department of the Association for the Prohibition of Unkind Treatment of Brute Beasts, in the city of X. If no objection should be made, the secretary would proceed to read this letter.

The secretary then presented the letter, which asked, first, that the Turley General Culture Society would take up, and consider the question whether the growing employment of incubators with steam-heat for the hatching of chickens might not properly excite the vigorous opposition of persons who desired to prevent unkindness towards animals and to secure for them uniform tenderness of treatment. The practice of removing eggs from the nest, and from the natural processes of incubation supplied by the hen, the producer of the eggs, is becoming more and more common; and while the society forwarding the communication did not desire to encourage that excess of zeal which

would pursue trifling causes of complaint, the feeling among the members is that, as the number of domestic fowls is very large, and their feelings presumably are not so wanting in sensitiveness as to warrant complete disregard of them, there is at least reason for discussion of the matter by humane persons whose minds revolt at any act of unkindness towards these helpless friends of

MAN.

Interrupting the reading of the letter, Puella Bluitt said she could hardly regard this matter as having any considerable claim upon the attention of a society devoted to general culture. She would not willingly wound the humblest creature or sanction anything likely to inflict the smallest pain; but she asserted with the confidence of prolonged experience in the raising and care of poultry that the domestic hen cared little whether certain eggs were committed to her functions or not. Few animals have less sentiment than hens. She had known hens to sit for weeks upon porcelain eggs, and even portions of brick, and, so far as could be perceived, with perfect indifference to the result.

"But how do you know how the hen in her inner consciousness may have felt?" asked Florabella Burns.

Puella Bluitt retorted that while the study of the inner consciousness of hens had never largely engaged her attention, she felt sure that such consciousness could never be sufficiently vivid to produce genuine suffering. Possibly the hen, under such conditions, might have yearnings—undefined yearnings—after something, it knew not what; but in her view the worst feeling that could be experienced would be only a vague kind of disappointment, and it really seemed to her that a society for general culture would be going very far out of its way to devote much time and intellectual energy to an attempt to measure and to sympathize with the possible chagrin of a hen.

Florabella Burns was about to take the floor, when the secretary interposed with the remark that she had not yet read the last sentence of the letter. This gave the reason why the society in the city had taken up the

matter. The feelings of the adult hen had had no consideration. The proposition of the society was based wholly upon solicitude for the chickens yet unborn.

"Why," asked Florabella Burns, "should there be any more solicitude for a little chicken hatched by an incubator than for a little chicken hatched by a hen?"

"The correspondent society," said the secretary, "has been deeply touched by the indisputable circumstance that the little chickens hatched in the incubator can never know a mother's love."

Murmurs of sympathy were heard all around them.

Florabella Burns said it was outrageous.

Puella Bluit said this was to her a new thought, impressive and affecting, and she was sure the society should take action at once.

Mrs. Pauline Johnson offered a plea for caution. She protested against precipitate action. Let us be sure of our ground before we commit the society to any line of policy with respect to the subject. Whether the orphaned chickens were less or more unhappy under the conditions supplied by the circumstances of their birth, nobody really knows. Possibly in many cases they may be in fact better off than if the hen, which would naturally have superintended the hatching, had not been particularly judicious in the matter of rearing her young. Besides, something is to be said for man. Chickens are an important food-product, and any application of scientific principles which tended to enlarge the supply must not be lightly dealt with.

Mrs. Sarah Perch said that she thought this view sordid. The total question is, do the young fowls suffer? If they do, surely no consideration of money or of appetite should be permitted to forbid interference in their behalf.

After a general expression of opinion upon the part of the members, the secretary said that a further communication upon another but perhaps kindred subject had been received from the society in the city, and she asked that she might read it so that, if the matters

should be referred to a committee, the two letters might go over together.

No objection being made, the secretary proceeded to read a letter which explained that the city society had encountered rather singular embarrassment in dealing with a case of seeming cruelty to animals in the Zoological Garden. The vice-president, while visiting the Garden recently with some children, had been shocked to observe that the boa-constrictors are fed with live rabbits. After observing with feelings of horror the manifest suffering of the rabbits from terror, she hurried home to call a meeting of the executive committee, which instantly adopted resolutions indignantly protesting against the practice of giving living rabbits to the serpents. These resolutions were sent to the president of the Zoo Society, and steps were taken to adopt legal measures to restrain the practice, if the request of the executive committee should not be promptly heeded.

To the pain and surprise of the committee a courteous communication was received the next day from the president, explaining that the boa-constrictors cannot eat dead animals. If offered dead food the snakes themselves will perish from hunger. The society therefore found itself in this extraordinary and most distressing quandary: If it averts suffering from the rabbits, it will inflict suffering upon the snakes. It has a duty to both kinds of animals, and the difficulty is to determine just in what direction that duty lies.

Mrs. O'Gorman said she perceived no difficulty. She would far rather let all the snakes die than place one dear little rabbit in misery.

Mrs. Gwinnett begged however to urge that there is no more dreadful method of producing death than by starvation, and it seemed to her a very strange perversion of the functions of a society organized for the express purpose of averting suffering from animals that it should arrange deliberately to inflict upon any brute beast the agonies of death from hunger.

After prolonged discussion, the following resolution was adopted unanimously and with enthusiasm :

"Resolved, that the Turley Society for General Culture recommend the city society to ascertain if the boa-constrictors cannot be sustained in a condition of health by eating mice, and if so, to urge the substitution of rats and mice for rabbits."

The president then suggested that while the society is dealing with subjects of this nature, it might not waste time if it should take up and discuss the cruel practice of docking horses' tails.

The debate that followed developed much unanimity of feeling against the practice referred to ; but after several members had spoken, Puella Bluitt, in giving her reasons for objecting to the abbreviation of horses' tails, said that an animal has few methods of giving visible expression to its feelings. Nature has provided, in a very wonderful way, that the movement of the tail commonly known as wagging shall supply such expression, and that to remove the part which is the medium of giving voice as it were to the emotions seemed to her a proceeding of the cruellest character.

Florabella Burns rose to ask if she understood the speaker to intend to indicate that horses wag their tails.

"Assuredly!" replied Miss Bluitt.

"Never!" exclaimed Mrs. Burns.

"I have seen them do it."

"You are mistaken ; what you regard as wagging is nothing but a movement for driving off flies."

"You may interpret it as you will," replied Miss Bluitt. "I interpret it as a demonstration signifying gladness. I have seen cows wag their tails in the same manner, under pleasant impulses, and other animals also—monkeys and birds. I have no doubt the rabbits of which we have been speaking do the very same thing when they are in good spirits."

"Rabbits have no tails," said the president, "or no tails worth speaking of."

"Very well," responded Miss Bluitt, "they wag what they have. Everybody has witnessed the spectacle."

"I do trust," said Mrs. Brown, "that this society, devoted to the culture of the human intellect along general lines, will not make itself ridiculous. If we shall go before the community as investigators of the maternal yearning of hens and of the sentimental impulses which urge rabbits to wag their alleged tails, I am afraid we shall simply excite derision." Mrs. Brown then moved to lay upon the table any further references to the subject under consideration, and the motion was carried.

Pending the motion to adjourn, Miss Bluitt begged permission to state that she held in her hand an invitation from Mr. Irwin McGann, inviting the members of the society to visit his studio to witness the operation of his electric motor.

Miss Bluitt remarked that she saw the smiles that had come upon the faces of the members as they heard this invitation read, but she begged to assure them that this remarkable invention, which she herself had regarded as a complete failure, was now actually in full operation, and could be pronounced a triumphant success.

Upon motion the invitation was accepted with thanks, and the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER XIV

INTO THE NEW WORLD WHICH IS THE OLD

MANY times as the winter went rolling by, Walter Drury resolved that he would find an opportunity to say to Dorothea Hamilton the words that would permit the long-restrained flood of feeling to pour forth; but just the right opportunity never came. He had met her at the house of Mrs. Burns, and had walked home with her; but a confession of love seemed to require some better place than the street for its making, and when they reached her home, and when he called at her home, either young Frobisher was there upon the most frivolous pretence to see Dorothea about the church-music, or Mrs. Gridley or some other neighbour had dropped in to spend the evening, or papa remained in the parlour with persistence that had in it something almost maddening for a lover. Walter strongly suspected papa of entertaining a grim and shameless purpose to keep himself in the way, so that love's young dream might have no realization.

Vexed and disappointed that he could not speak to the girl of his passion, he thought to write to her about it. In his letters he had said indeed almost everything but just the plain "I love you"; why not in this manner finally make the avowal which Fate seemed to say he should not make with his lips? He need not wait for that opportunity. Any day would be a good day.

But, upon reflection, this seemed not the very nicest method of expressing for the first time affection for a

woman. It might even have an appearance of cowardice. How much better, how much more romantic and suitable, to stand face to face with her, and to look into the eyes that were always beautiful, and into which he hoped to see a new light come, as his soul went out to meet her soul?

He did, in fact, three or four times begin letters containing a proposal; but he tore them up. They seemed stilted and artificial, and as if he were not really in earnest.

No, the manly way, the true-lover way, was to speak to her. Rapture by mail really might be said to lack some of the best qualities of rapture. He would go down once more to Turley, and would deliberately beforehand prepare a situation in which he could express himself. How much he regretted having neglected to make an avowal while they were out driving together in the autumn?

And now the spring had come, and soon the summer would be here. How foolish he was to defer the time of his perfect happiness, if indeed she loved him! She would have a right to believe he did not care for her so very much; and perhaps some other and less deliberate suitor might appear. Young Frobisher, he remembered, appeared to have elements of impetuosity. Propinquity, he knew, counts for much in these matters, and propinquity to Dorothea Hamilton, if one might be permitted to judge from appearances, was getting to be the main purpose of the existence of Lochinvar Frobisher. And he was a good-looking fellow—or pretty good-looking, Walter thought, for a man of just that kind—a man of small intellectual calibre.

Walter had always disliked young Frobisher's habit of hovering about the Hamilton house, and of hovering about Dorothea under the shallow pretext of considering the choir matters. Why didn't he hover over the fat bass-singer or the singularly homely first soprano? The man was in love with her, and how could Walter know for sure that Dorothea cared so much for Walter Drury, that she might not, while smarting from his neglect, or

his refusal to break his silence, fling herself into the arms of Frobisher?

Walter laughed a little bit to himself, as he considered how well assured in fact he was that the encircling arms of the minister's son would never clasp so fair an object; but still, he must indeed speak to her. She had a right to expect that he would do that soon, if he had any passion in his soul.

When the sweet, warm days of early May were covering the earth with beauty, and nature was rejoicing, with grass and foliage and flowers, that the desolate winter had passed, Walter ran down to Turley one morning when his work was done upon his journal, and stopping at the Hamilton house for a moment to speak to Dorothea, went onward to Captain Bluitt's dwelling.

He had written to her that he would come, and she had answered that she would be ready. And so, after greeting his uncle and his aunt, he called Rufus, and he and Rufus went down the steps upon the side of the river-bank to the beach below, followed by Captain Bluitt, who felt like supervising this small nautical operation.

They unlocked the boat-house, and Rufus took down the oars, and brought the cushions from the locker, and hunted up the rowlocks, and bailed out the few pailfuls of water that were in the boat.

And when all was ready, and the boat was as clean and tidy and pretty as a boat can be, Rufus and Walter pushed it out into the water, and tied it to the post near the steps at the end of the little pier.

As they did so the captain, who was beginning to feel as if he should like to go along, if the young people were only married, and clear past the period when three people are "no company," turned his head and said, "Here she comes," and he and Walter and Rufus saw a maiden coming down the bank-steps in the most charming of all spring dresses, and in a spring bonnet of really surpassing loveliness, carrying in her hand a parasol, and with a smiling face, more beautiful than anything within range of vision on the most beautiful day of the year.

She greeted the captain and Walter and Rufus, and thanked the captain most graciously when he said :

"I hope you will have a fine time ; it is a perfect day for the water."

Then she sat upon the red cushion in the stern of the boat, while Walter shipped the oars, as Rufus pushed the little craft away from the pier ; and as Walter bent to his task, and the boat glided out upon the surface of the shining water, Rufus shut the doors of the boat-house, and went homeward to tell Hannah about it, and the captain, gazing after them for a while, turned at last upon his heel, and said :

"What a fool I was not to marry when I was young ! I have a great notion to do so yet."

Dorothea watched the rower as with strong hands he swept the oars through the water, until the dainty boat fairly danced across the waves, and she thought how handsome he was, and what manly strength and skill he had, and how wise and learned and gifted he was, and how forlorn and desolate her life would be, could she not sometimes hear from him in those dear letters and sometimes be with him.

Now and then he stopped rowing, and held the oars out of the water that the boat might drift, that he might enjoy the scene with her, that he might talk with her and look at her.

How gloriously beautiful she seemed sitting there in the after part of the boat ! The great day had come for him. Before they came that way again he would know her mind. They would begin in that boat a journey which would be made together so long as life should last, or he would come back a broken-hearted man, to go alone along a way that would be sorrowful beyond all reach of sorrow that he had ever known.

"Why is it," he said to her as he paused from his exercise, "that water always adds so much to the beauty of natural scenery ? This Turley view would be nothing without the river."

"Is it not beautiful ?" she answered.

"Whether it be a river or a lake, or a rippling stream

or a waterfall, the presence of water never fails to make the landscape more lovely. I wonder just why? Water in a cup or a basin or a puddle is not especially attractive. Water? Why, it is just a colourless fluid, H_2O ; I don't quite understand it."

"Nor I," said Dorothea, "but why should we try to analyze it? We don't care that it is H_2O , but we do care that it is charming to look at."

"And useful to boil things in," said Walter, "and to keep our bodies from shrivelling up. It is a serious thing, isn't it, to think that our bodies are two-thirds water? Maybe that is why we like to look at it so much."

"It is just as if you met one of your relatives, you mean?"

"Something like that. But then if the earth is our mother, we are brother and sister to the rocks and the grass, and—and—well, and to the mud, also, aren't we?"

"The mud clings to us like a very fond relation, sometimes," said Dorothea, "as it did to you, for instance, the first day I met you, and you walked by the side of the carriage."

"I shall never forget that day," replied Walter; "I thought it was a great day for me."

"This is a better one, though, isn't it? Drifting along the water is so much more delightful than any motion upon land. I wish I could row."

"Will you try?"

"If you will let me. But I am afraid I can't do it very well."

Walter drew in the oars, and giving her his hand, she stepped over the thwart, and took his place while he sat upon the cushion in the stern.

She dipped the oars in the water, and began to row with awkwardness which he thought charming.

"Were you intending to go up or down the river?" he asked presently.

She stopped and looked seriously at him, then at the river-bank, and then she said:

"Didn't you say we should row down to Graver's Point?"

"That was my idea."

"Well, then?"

"The reason I spoke was that you first started up the river, and then you appeared to change your mind and headed out to sea."

She laughed prettily.

"I told you I did not know how to row."

"How would it do for you to take one oar while I sit beside you and row with the other?"

"Very nicely."

Walter thought that would be the most delightful method of rowing that could be devised; and so, sitting side by side, and very happy, they sent the boat onward to the point.

The bow was grounded upon the sand-beach close by the rocks, and Walter, leaping out, pulled the boat far up on the sand; then, helping his companion to disembark, he took out the anchor, and carried it from the water's edge, and planted it where it would safely hold the boat.

They clambered up the path that ran along the side of the promontory toward the highway at the rear, and soon they came out upon the little park that crowned the summit.

No one was there. The grass was fresh and sweet and bright with the vivid green of spring-time, and the trees had their first glory of leaves, and the birds were noisy and active, and the soft wind blew from the south.

As they walked slowly along the pathway and looked about them, Dorothea said:

"Do you remember that we said as we stood here last autumn that verdure was tame in comparison with the glory of the crimson and the gold that flamed from the trees and the hills? But it does not seem so now, does it?"

"No; we could not wish for anything more beautiful than this," said Walter; "but in truth there is no comparison. Each season has its own loveliness and all are lovely."

"We are not perfectly conscious of it, when we are

very young," she said. "We enjoy the out-of-door things then, but we do not know or think why."

"So it will be all through life, I think," responded Walter. "The larger knowledge gives clearer insight and keener pleasure. Wouldn't it be queer if we two, now, in our youth, could have all that experience will have taught us when we shall be old?"

"I'm afraid it would not be half so much fun," said Dorothea. "I know, if you were wise with the wisdom of eighty years, you would scare me. I like young folks to be young."

"That is Nature's way, too. But what I mean is that it would be pleasant to see as clearly as we shall see when we have the higher power of vision."

"Maybe so."

They seated themselves upon the bench whence they could look towards the cliff and the river.

"When I first read *Romeo and Juliet*," said Walter, "I was not much more than a boy. It seemed to me to be a lot of foolish, love-sick nonsense: something to laugh at. But the time came when, as I read that play, I was able to perceive that it is a tremendous tragedy of human passion, of the master-passion. The man who wrote that saw deep into the heart of things."

"I have not read it for a long time," she said.

"I witnessed a performance of the play last winter," continued Walter, "but I did not like it."

"Why?"

"Oh, well! I do not care much for any of Shakespeare's plays upon the stage: and this one—why, the tawdry finery of the actors, the sham of the scenery, the very physical representation of the most spiritual of spiritual things, made the performance seem coarse and vulgar. It wiped all the bloom from the poem. It robbed the fragrant flower of its sweet perfume."

"I should not like it, I think."

She felt then that she should not like anything, no matter what, that Walter disliked.

"You remember," he said, "that Romeo thinks he is in love with another woman; but the first glimpse he

has of Juliet shows him that he did not know himself. He loves her the very instant he sees her. If I had thought of it at all, when I first read the play, I should have thought this merely the poet's fancy: an invention without counterpart in real life. Do you know when I was at Uncle Bluit's house the first Sunday I saw you, he said to me, 'When a man and a woman who are intended for each other first meet, they know each other instantly as intended for each other.'

"Do you believe it?" asked Dorothea, without looking at him. Her hands were folded upon her lap, and her eyes were upon the grass at her feet.

"Believe it," exclaimed Walter; "I feel sure that the truest true-love is born in that way. There are two souls, but they are only half-souls; each half knows the other; and they fly together."

'Perhaps that is God's way,' she said.

"Yes; 'they two shall be one flesh;' more than that, one spirit—one spiritual nature."

"I have heard of such things," said Dorothea.

"But I know of an instance; I can tell you of one," he said.

"Well?"

"You will listen?"

"Oh, yes."

"On a summer morning not long ago, a man who cared only for himself, and did not know if ever he should care for another, wandered without a thought of worship or of adventure into a church in a country town. He sat down and looked about, and thought it all very stupid, until suddenly he saw the face of a girl across the room. He was strangely attracted by her; but presently she rose and began to sing, and before her voice was hushed he loved her. He did not know her name, he could not see her with perfect distinctness, but, borne in upon his soul was the conviction that her life somehow was involved with his. He gained her acquaintance, and knew her well at last, and every day he lived he loved her better, and better, and better—and that woman, my dear, was you."

She had her eyes still upon the ground, and her head was inclined forward. She did not answer. For a moment there was silence.

"I wish I knew that you loved me so much," he said.

She put her hand in his, and looked him full in the face, and there was tearfulness in the smile she gave him.

"I love you dearly," she said.

He kissed her, still holding her hand.

"And, oh, how strange!" she continued; "I felt from the very first, as you did, that we belonged to each other. Yes, dear, it is God who has given you to me. No man shall put us asunder."

"And I will try so hard to make you happy."

"I am happy now," she said; "I did not know there was such happiness in the world."

"And surely," he said, "it will be so always, if we love each other dearly. What is happiness? Love. I have heard so often, but I never even guessed the meaning of the words."

"Yes, always," she answered, echoing his words.

Still he fondled her hand, looking at it and stroking it.

"And if any dark days shall come, and I suppose they must," said Walter, "we will make them seem bright by our affection."

"They will not be dark for me if you are there," she said, tenderly, smiling upon him.

"I wonder," he continued, "if old married people—people who have been married many, many years, love each other as much as they did at first—as we do?"

"They say," she answered, "that when there is true spiritual union—and ours will be that, will it not, dearest?—that the two grow more and more alike, until their very faces have the same appearance."

"Wonderful, isn't it?"

"Oh, no," she said, "not wonderful, excepting that entire spiritual union is wonderful. For if I love you dearly, I shall try to be like you, and you will love me and strive to resemble me, and so, at the last, shall we not indeed be one?"

"Yes," responded Walter, reflectively, "one. We grow towards each other, or we grow apart, I suppose?"

"Apart!" she exclaimed, with tremor in her voice. "Oh, not that. Not that. I should die if you should turn away from me. No, I could not live."

He put his arm about her.

"There is no fear of that, my dearest," he said. "The strange, irresistible impulse that drove me to you—how marvellous it was!—came from the very centre of my soul. It saw its own in you."

"The impulse was divine."

"Yes; and it is infinite—it is for eternity."

They sat there, happy, the sunshine of the soft spring day more glorious, the sweetness of re-born Nature more acutely sweet, because there was in their souls such joy as language cannot express.

"Do you remember," he said at last, "those lines about two lovers?"—

'And on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold.
And so across the hills they went
In that new world, which is the old.'

Do you remember that?"

"Oh, yes," she said, as she clasped his hand more closely. "And the next verse?"

Walter repeated it:

"'Across the hills and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess followed him.'

And you, dearest, are the princess."

"Yes, yes," she answered, smiling and looking into his face, "a happy princess, indeed; and I will follow you, and love you. I would suffer for you, and die for you."

He kissed her, and they rose, and, hand-in-hand, looked toward the hills on the far horizon.

Then they walked slowly toward the road, her hand upon his arm, two conquerors, both triumphant, both yielding themselves to perfect bliss.

Around by the road, and down by the gentle incline beyond the cliff, that led to the river, they descended, and he said:

"I could stay here for ever, but we must go home again."

So she entered the boat, and he pushed it into the stream, and clambered into it and took the oars.

He permitted the little craft to drift for a while, as he sat there looking at her. Then he said, as if he could hardly bear to break the spell that both were under:

"Will your father and mother accept me, dear?"

The look of happiness passed from her face. She had been so entranced by her joy that she had forgotten other things.

"Mother will, I know. But father: I am not sure. It is dreadful to say so, but I fear he has prejudice against you."

"I felt so," said Walter, "but it is unreasonable, and I believe I can overcome it."

"Oh, I do hope so," she answered, "he is most kind and affectionate. I know that he desires my happiness. He can have no good cause for disliking you."

"I am now earning a good living. I am well enough off to marry. I am sure to do better. When shall I speak to him?"

"Not now," she said quickly. "No, not now. I will talk with mother. It would be terrible if he should forbid me to see you."

Walter's anger kindled; but at once he quenched it.

"I hope he would not do that."

"He is my kind father, and I love him. It would be sad for me if he should come between us. What would I do?"

"Oh, never mind," said Walter. "He will not be unjust. You cannot quarrel with your father, nor can I quarrel with him. Let us put the matter by. But it does seem, doesn't it, as if there can be no joy in this world without the touch of bitterness."

He took up the oars again.

"Let me row with you," she said.

"Is that the better way? Isn't it my task to toil for you, my love, in the long journey we are now beginning?"

"No," she said, smiling brightly once more; "no, that is not the way. We are going to toil together, side by side. While you are doing your share, I must be close by you, doing mine. I cannot be happy so far from you as this."

So then she moved to the place where he was, and sat by him once again, and oars in hand they urged the boat homeward.

It was late in the afternoon when they reached the little pier by Captain Bluit's boat-house; and when Walter had given his hand to his sweetheart to help her to alight, and had tied the boat to the post, they began to climb the steps to the top of the bank.

Florabella Burns was there. She had been walking upon the river-side of the street, and she saw them coming. She stopped to greet them.

As she did so, an odd look came upon her face, and presently she said quietly:

"I congratulate you both."

"How did you know?" demanded Dorothea, startled, but smiling.

"My dear," replied Florabella, "I saw it in your eyes. If I had known about it I would have hurried on. Oh, you dear, sweet girl, how glad I am! And you, Walter," she said, giving him her hand, "didn't I tell you you were lucky?"

"Yes," said Walter. "You are my fairy godmother. You simply rain benedictions."

"Isn't it just too perfectly lovely for anything," continued Florabella, joyfully. "To think of you two lovers sailing over the water in pursuit of bliss, and then sailing home again loaded down with it. I wish I could hug you, Dorry. Good-bye, dear. Good-bye, Walter," and Florabella passed onward toward her home, sighing a little and feeling rather downcast. With a final sigh, she said to herself:

"What wouldn't I give to taste that happiness again."

The lovers entered Dorothea's house to bid good-bye. There was no one in the parlour.

Walter took her in his arms, and kissed her upturned happy face again and again, and then after one long last embrace, he went away.

That very night, when Dorry had gone to her room, John Hamilton said to his wife:

"Mother, wasn't Dorry upon the river to-day with that young Drury?"

"Yes, for a little while."

"Well, I don't half like it. He is much too attentive to her. She must not encourage him."

"I am afraid she likes him."

"But she mustn't like him. He is not the sort of man for her at all."

"What is your objection to him, dear?" asked his wife.

"Why, in the first place, he is in a miserable business where he can never earn any money but a poor salary; and then, he belongs to the Bluitts, very clever, but very common people. A girl like Dorry can do very much better. She must aim higher."

"He seemed to me like a superior young man."

"Well, I don't like him. Dorry ought to make a brilliant match. It is important for us, too, that she should."

"Brilliant matches are often unhappy, John."

"They needn't be. She might as well marry a man worth half a million dollars, as to throw herself away upon a poor newspaper writer. I will never give my consent to it, never! It had better be stopped now."

And John Hamilton, in a condition of considerable irritation, resumed the book he had been reading.

On that very night, also, Mrs. Frobisher sat in her husband's study with him, and when he had finished writing and could spare time for talk, she turned over upon the table the book she had been reading and said:

"My love, have you particularly noticed Lochinvar lately?"

"Why, no!" exclaimed the clergyman, looking at her with surprise. "Is anything the matter?"

"Well, my dear, there can be no doubt that he is becoming more and more interested in that Hamilton girl—Dorothea. He goes there constantly."

"She is in the choir; that is the only reason."

"No, it isn't. A mother sees such things clearly. He is getting to be fond of her. Besides, I notice that he is more indifferent about his meals, and he mopes a good deal, exactly as if he were in love."

"Well, what of it? She is a fine girl."

"But not precisely our kind, dear."

"You think not? I think the boy could hardly do better!"

"No, dear, he might do *much* better. Any real Metcalf can do better. He should seek for some one in his own station in life."

"Mary, I think you carry that kind of thing too far. The girl is lovely."

"In some respects, yes, and she is bright enough to seek to elevate herself. I very much fear she has completely ensnared Lochinvar."

"I wouldn't use just that term, my love, if I were you. The Hamiltons are eminently respectable people."

"Of their kind. But no member of my family ever held a position as a hired person in a little bank, on a salary."

"Why, I am on a salary myself."

"Yes, I know; but it is different. You are in the sacred ministry; you have charge of the highest spiritual interests of the people. It is a profession. All the Metcalfs have been either land-owners or professional men."

"Well, my love," answered the doctor, reflecting upon some rather forlorn Metcalfs of whom he knew, any one of whom would have been glad to have a salary, "I do not see what I can do about it. The boy can't marry, at any rate. He has nothing."

"All the more reason then that he should aim high—aim to get an heiress."

Dr. Frobisher determined not to discuss the subject further. He turned again to his table, and began to put the concluding touches to his sermon upon "The Deceitfulness of Riches," and Mrs. Frobisher took up her book and pretended to read it, while she reflected upon Lochinvar's recklessness in throwing himself away.

Walter arranged to take dinner with his uncle and aunt, and to return to the city upon the evening train.

"You had a fine time on the river, Walter?" remarked Captain Bluitt, as they sat with Miss Puella in the library.

"Fine!" said Walter.

"She's a nice girl," said the captain, contemplatively.

"Yes, indeed," responded Walter.

"You settled it, did you?" asked his aunt.

"Settled what?"

Miss Bluitt laughed.

"Now, Walter," she said, "it's of no use trying to hide it from me. You're engaged."

"How on earth do all the women find out such things?"

"Why, Walter," said Miss Puella, "I know it from the way you came into the house; from the way you slammed the door and ran up to your room, three steps at a time. When I heard you I said to myself: 'It's over! He has her!' I knew you would get her."

"Women are sharp about such things," said the captain. "Well, I'm mighty glad to hear it, Walter; there are not ten girls in the country like her."

"There's not one," said he.

"That's right, my son. Sure enough, she's the only one. I had a kind of notion you would clinch the thing to-day. If it hadn't been for that I might have gone along."

"I'm glad you didn't," said Walter smiling.

"Of course. But, Wally, you'll not marry right away?"

"No," said Walter, "and it will be better to keep the matter secret for the present. I'm afraid her father will not be very ready to accept me; she is afraid."

"Humph!" said Captain Bluitt, "I don't see why he should be a fool. You'll make her a fine husband. She might have done a good deal worse."

"Fathers are always that way," said Miss Bluitt, with a look of disgust.

"And you are getting along so well in your business. I tell you, my son, it surprises me the way you write. Where *did* you ever get the knack? Not one of our people ever had any turn for writing. It's perfectly astonishing how you turn off an article, and the words you use."

"Oh, I guess there is nothing unusual about it," said Walter, with a laugh.

"But there is!" responded the captain. "Not one of our family could have done it. The fact is, writing is the hardest work I ever have to do. Can't do it at all, in fact. I never had any command of words; and the English language has some of the toughest kind."

"I don't know," said Walter. "I never thought so. What words, for example, strike you as being hard?"

"Oh, lots of them. Some words I see in the newspapers continually, I can hardly pronounce at all."

"Such as——?"

"Well, words like exiguous and litigious; and when it comes to fla—flag—flagitious, I am simply out. I can hardly say it at all; or say it anywhere near right. And Egypt! Do you have any trouble with Egypt?"

"What kind of trouble?"

"To write it."

"No, I think not."

"The man that invented the word must have been actuated by malice to put three down letters one right after the other. I can hardly write it at all."

"You like a word such as Connecticut, do you?" asked Puella.

"Something like that."

"Well, then, I would write about Connecticut, and let Egypt alone."

After dinner, and just before Walter was ready to

leave the house, Captain Bluitt said to him, Miss Bluitt being up-stairs:

"My boy, I can't tell you how glad I am you are to marry that sweet little girl. You'll never do a better thing than that as long as you live. I envy you. There is no real happiness outside of marriage. You'll be a better man for her companionship. Now let me tell you something. If John Hamilton makes any objection because you are poor, you will tell him that you will make your way in the world, for with your splendid talents you will. It wouldn't surprise me if you would be President of the United States; but you can tell him something else: that I am going to back you while I live, and to leave you all I have when I am gone—nearly all, anyhow."

Walter grasped his uncle's hand and thanked him, and saying farewell to him and to his aunt, who met him in the hall, he started upon his homeward way, feeling that life, just at that moment, could hardly be more fully charged with bliss.

As soon as Walter got home, late as it was, he wrote an eight-page letter to Dorothea.

CHAPTER XV

THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR

AFTER meditating for several days upon the subject of investment in the McGann Electric Motor without reaching a positive conclusion, John Hamilton resolved to visit once more the inventor's workshop, and to try to discover some defective quality in the device, or to confirm his favourable opinion of it.

His eagerness to find a way of enlarging his fortune had not been diminished in intensity, but, as he considered the offer made to him by McGann, it began to appear rather less attractive, and to contain smaller promise of great results. The impression made upon his mind by the spectacle of the motor in actual operation, and by McGann's declarations of the possibilities of its application to practical uses, had lost some of its strength when he had reflected upon the subject.

As he walked up the street after bank-hours on his way to the studio, he said to himself, as if to assure himself of the fact, that he had definitely abandoned the project of using the bank's money improperly for this purpose. If he had looked far inside to that hidden self which is the real self, and to examine which is sometimes an unpleasing operation, he would have discovered, perhaps, that he still held in reserve for consideration under very extreme circumstances the notion that money could be had in that way, if all other methods failed.

But having persuaded himself that there was no

longer danger in that direction, he proceeded to speculate concerning the plan that he might have adopted for taking the money from the bank, if he had been so unwise as to yield to the strong temptation that he had now successfully resisted, and put behind him, he believed, for ever.

He permitted his mind, in a manner, to play with the subject; and as it did so, a measure of procedure was clearly outlined to it by which he could take five thousand dollars at one time, and an equal sum at another, with practically no chance that the withdrawal of the money could be discovered under any circumstances with which his experience had made him familiar.

"It is so safe," he said, "and so easy, that there is reason for wonder that more men in my situation have not availed themselves of it."

But he felt grateful and happy that there was no longer any reason for considering seriously any such enterprise; and, as he approached McGann's place he had reached the determination to surrender the option the inventor had given him.

When he entered the room McGann greeted him warmly, but, Hamilton thought, with somewhat less eagerness of expectancy than might have been looked for.

The motor was running finely, and as he and McGann walked around it, the inventor fondly patted a part of the frame of the machine, and said:

"I wouldn't swap that for the biggest fortune in the country."

Hamilton stopped and looked at it.

"I have been trying to arrange to get the money," he said; "but there has been unexpected difficulty about it. And, besides, do you really think the thing can do all that you claim for it?"

"Why, certainly; all and more. But I tell you, Hamilton, don't you go into it if you have any doubts. I don't want to unload any risk on you."

"Well, you know, all such things have elements of risk. We can't be certain, can we?"

"You can't, of course ; but I can. I am certain."

"But you missed it often before when you felt quite as sure ?"

"Maybe so ; but this is different. There the thing is, running. There is no guess-work about that. Nobody ever made one run before. We have got that far, for sure, anyway."

"Yes, but——"

"It is all right for you to be careful, but to tell the truth, I can't wait too long for you to make up your mind. I want the money. If you back out, I shall have no trouble to find a man who will go in and stay in."

"You have had offers ?"

"Two or three of them," said the judge.

"Any one I know ?"

"I don't know that I ought to tell, but I will say that Captain Bluitt has pretty much said he will invest, since I got the machine actually in motion."

"Bluitt is considering it, is he ?"

"Not considering. He has decided to take your option if you give it up. The fact is, I owe him money, and I shouldn't wonder if he thought this about the only chance to get it back. Anyhow, I am under obligation to him, and I shall be glad to do him a favour."

Hamilton looked serious. Then he said :

"You wouldn't like to have me bring an expert machinist here to give me an opinion of the motor, would you ?"

"I don't want to be mean about it, Hamilton, but I ask you, now, would you do that, if you were in my place, and no patents had been secured ? No, I can't allow that."

"Oh, well," said Hamilton, "I suppose it wouldn't be fair to you. Will you give me forty-eight hours more to think it over and to get the money ?"

"Yes, but I really must stop there. I want to oblige you, but I have to protect myself. Call it two days, and then you come in or agree to stay out ?"

"Very well," said Hamilton, "I will let you hear from me before the time has expired."

As he left the room and began his homeward walk, the cashier discovered that he had experienced a complete revulsion of feeling respecting the motor.

"It is now or never for me," he said. "If I permit this opportunity to pass, I shall never have another one. There is Bluitt, with plenty of money already, and no family to spend it on, eager to go into this venture, so that he can make more; and I can't touch it, no matter how good it is! That's the way it always is," he said bitterly. "The man who has gets more. The man who is poor can't get his little finger in. Bluitt wouldn't lend me the money to make the investment with; no, men don't do that kind of thing; but he will risk it for his own advantage."

"Risk! There is no risk! Bluitt is a shrewd business man, with all his foolishness. He sees plainly enough, as I do—as any intelligent man would—that this motor is a money-maker; a money-maker for him, but not for me!

"Within forty-eight hours either I will have begun to make my fortune, or that ridiculous ex-sea-captain will have started to roll up more useless riches for himself. It's pretty hard, with wealth and comfort within sight, to be pushed back into poverty and the position of a hireling!

"Money, after all—bank money, is just a tool. Of itself, lying in a vault, it is really useless. Couldn't I very properly borrow a carpenter's tools to do a bit of work without any wrong to the owner? Can't I just take the tool that is locked up in the bank, use it, and put it back, without hurting anybody?"

He could have seen plainly enough, the man whose business was to lend money, the defect of such reasoning; but his passionate desire to become an owner of a machine that would make him a rich man persuaded him to shut his eyes to the truth.

Before he reached his home he had almost decided to take the money from the bank; he said to himself

(a deadly process that! trying to lie to oneself!) that he had made no decision; that the matter still lay open; but, in truth, if he had dealt candidly with himself he would have perceived that the fatal step into crime had been taken. It was always a mental process. He had not yet touched the money; but he had actually become a thief.

The subject was uppermost in his thought that night and in the morning. When he reached the bank and had finished opening the letters and had disposed of some small matters of routine, he concluded to ascertain, just for the sake of satisfying his curiosity, how that scheme he had thought of, and thrust aside, really would work.

He took a piece of paper and a pen and figured it out. There was no flaw in it. It appeared to him certain that no human being could discover the disappearance of the money, unless experts should overhaul the entire set of books of the institution, and should explore to the very bottom the bank's resources. That had never been done by anybody within his memory, and probably never would be done.

Then he went into the vault, and picked up a package of bills amounting to five thousand dollars, and brought it out, and tossed it carelessly upon his desk. Anybody might look at it, he thought; he wouldn't make the first motion toward acting as if he were stealing the money.

The bills lay there all through the day, and with officers and clerks coming and going, nobody noticed them. Then as the bank-hours drew to an end, he cleared away some of his papers, and as he did so he tossed the money into the drawer of his desk. Still he tried to make himself believe that the matter was not settled. But presently the time came when the vault must be locked by the teller, and he sat at his desk, and heard the door slam, and the lock click while he made no movement.

Then he finished up some writing he thought he had to do, and when it was ended nobody remained but the night-watchman.

"It won't do to leave that money lying here all night," he said. "I'll put it in my pocket, anyhow."

He did so, shut his desk and left the bank. His intention had been to go home; but the impulse to visit McGann was too strong to be resisted. He turned in that direction, with his face hot, his heart beating faster than usual, and a mingled feeling of hopefulness and desperation in his soul.

By the time he reached McGann's place he had half resolved (or he thought he had half resolved) to carry the money home with him and to put it back in the morning.

McGann welcomed him, and said:

"Don't you think you might just as well let go the idea of buying into the motor? I've had another good offer since I saw you, and Bluitt actually came in here this morning with a check for the money. If you say so, I will withdraw your option now."

This was the weight that dropped the balance. Hamilton did not hesitate. Assuming an air of cheerfulness, he said:

"Withdraw it! Why, man, I've succeeded in raising the money, and I have it in my pocket. Give me a receipt for five thousand dollars."

"Good," exclaimed the inventor. "You're a lucky man."

"And I must have also," said Hamilton, "a formal assignment to me of half the total interest in the invention, and when you apply for the patents half must be signed to me."

"That's right! that's all right. I know exactly how to do it. I've done it many a time before."

Then McGann and Hamilton together prepared the papers in due form, including Hamilton's promise to pay another five thousand dollars, and when they had been signed and witnessed by two neighbours, Hamilton handed the money to the inventor.

"Looks good, doesn't it?" remarked McGann as his fingers lovingly turned the notes over. "Well, sir, that's just nothing. When the motor is put on the

market you and I will have such stuff as that to throw away."

"I hope so," said Hamilton, smiling. "And now about getting the patents?"

"I will send in the application to-night," said McGann. "We will be making motors to sell before summer-time has gone."

The cashier looked about the shop, and felt some elation as he remembered that he was now one of the proprietors. He patted the motor with his hand as McGann had done on the preceding day. He owned part of it.

"Let me see you start it up once more, judge," he said.

The judge turned the switch, and the machine went into operation, and ran with perfect smoothness, and with really wonderful celerity.

"That's all right, I believe," exclaimed Hamilton, again patting the motor. "I believe we have hold of a good thing."

The cashier returned to his home, not without some pangs of regret that he had involved himself finally and hopelessly in wrong, but having also a feeling of relief that the struggle was over, the decision made, and the first bold step taken toward better fortune.

Being absolutely committed to the crime, the right policy for him was to keep up his courage, to thrust remorse away from him, and to look steadily forward to the rich harvest he should one day reap.

But, indeed, as he sat at dinner that night with his wife and daughter, and as they chatted in the old way about the domestic things, and the church things, and about their friends, he could not resist the impression that he had in a measure sundered himself from them.

These familiar topics of conversation no longer interested him very much. He seemed to have left such things behind him, to have drifted away from the mental condition which permitted him to regard them. While they talked in the usual manner of the common things, his mind was filled with the thought of his

transactions on that day, and he had a strong consciousness that a great gulf had been fixed between him and those who were so dear to him.

As he listened to their voices, and even while he responded to them, the thought would come to him: "What would they think if they knew what I know?" He carried a tremendous secret, and in that sweet atmosphere of home, with the two gentle women who loved him so much, it seemed to bear upon him as a heavy burden.

And after dinner, when they went into the library, he must have family worship. This had been always the practice in that house. He had not thought of it until the hour came on this evening, and he shrank from it. But clearly he could not avoid the duty now, for wife and daughter would be surprised and would ask for a reason. No, to avert suspicion that anything was wrong, he must follow the custom; and so, as the two women seated themselves in expectation, Hamilton took down the Bible and read a chapter.

Then he must pray. He really shrank from that act. He had been used to employ a book of prayers, one for each morning and evening of the week. He picked it up and opened it, and as he did so he had something like a sickening sensation. The whole situation had horror in it. To commit an offence against his Maker was one thing; but to come before Him with unrepented sin upon his soul, to pray to Him while defying Him—really, that was a formidable task for a man who still had spiritual sensibility.

"It is fortunate," he thought, "that the prayers are in print. I should never be able to make a prayer for myself;" and there was a flash of anguish through his soul, as he thought how far he must have fallen that he was afraid to pray.

He managed to suppress all manifestation of feeling, and to appear to his wife and daughter just as he always did, but presently as he read the prayer his voice quavered and almost broke down when he came to these words. He had not looked for them:

"May we and our loved ones be safe under Thy care. Keep us from all sin. Defend us by Thy mighty power against the attacks of the Evil One and against his secret snares. Strengthen us to resist the wickedness that is in the world. May we walk continually and consciously with God."

Hamilton said this with what confidence he could command, but the effort to retain self-control was a great one; and when the prayer was ended his wife came over to him, and putting her hand on his arm, asked:

"Is anything the matter, John?"

She looked at him in such a way that he thought she must suspect him; but she did not.

He made some answer about having had a trying day at the bank, and then, after chatting with the women in a pleasant way, he took up the evening paper, as was his custom, and seemed to be absorbed in reading.

The contact of his mind with religion helped to give him a new impulse. Before he had gone to bed he had half resolved to get the money back from McGann, to replace it in the bank, and to abandon the whole undertaking. During the restless, wakeful night the conclusion was wholly reached that within three hours the crime should be as though it had not been done.

As soon as breakfast was over, he put on his hat and walked out to McGann's house, feeling better and happier than he had done for several days.

"Fortunately," he said, "I reconsidered the step in time. It was a narrow escape; but it is the last time for me. I will never make such a movement again."

He reached the house and knocked upon the door. It was opened by the black woman who cooked and kept house for the inventor.

"Tell the judge I want to see him at once," said Hamilton.

"De jedge ain't yer, mars'r."

"Where is he? Down at the shop?"

"No, suh, he done gone to de city in de fus train dis mawnin'."

Hamilton's heart sank.

"Did he say when he would return?"

"Mebbe to-morrow, mebbe not fo' fo' or five days."

Hamilton turned and walked slowly homeward. Too late! McGann, of course, had taken the money with him, and no doubt much of it would be spent at once paying debts and making new purchases. Yes, it was too late!

When the first shock of disappointment was over, Hamilton's mind recurred to the alluring arguments that had first led him toward the motor, and, all possibility of receding being now hopeless, he considered that to recede, if he could do so, might be unwise.

"Oh, well," he said, "it is all right, anyhow! There is no use playing fast and loose with such a thing. Let it stand and I will not regret it."

He walked down to the bank, where the day passed as usual without notable incident. So smoothly and naturally, indeed, did the business glide by, that he was inclined sometimes to feel that his theft was not a reality, but was as if he had dreamed about it.

And then he thought how easy it would be to take the second five thousand dollars. He would not have so many tremors when the deed should have to be done again.

On the Saturday night following, a meeting of the congregation was held at the Presbyterian church, to consider the adoption of methods by which the mortgage upon the building could be removed, or at least be reduced in dimensions.

The attendance was large; the Hamiltons were there, and Miss Bluitt; and Judge McGann came in and sat in one of the pews before the meeting had finished singing the opening hymn.

After a brief statement by the pastor, concerning the need that the church should be relieved speedily from the burden of indebtedness, Elder Brown, principal of the public school, asked for suggestions respecting the best way of accomplishing the object.

One of the ladies proposed an oyster-supper; another

thought the community might be willing to endure one more fair for the sale of useful and fancy articles ; and still another urged that a concert with "home and foreign talent" would be a sure money-maker. Trustee Wilkins inclined to a magic-lantern show, with some comic pictures ; say views of the Holy Land for the main attraction, and then a bit of fun afterwards, or interspersed with the views.

Puella Bluitt spoke about the beauty and usefulness of self-denial, and recommended that everybody should go without butter and caramels for two months, and put the money-equivalent of these articles into mite-boxes.

When these and other plans for obtaining money had been offered and urged, Davis Cook, the plumber, and the librarian of the Sunday School, rose for the purpose of making a few observations.

"I don't want to oppose none of the schemes presented here to-night," he said, "or to do anything disagreeable to the brethern and sisters who are better Christians than I am, and many of whom have forgotten more, maybe, than I ever knowed. But I have the interests of this church at heart, and as we have been invited here for the purpose of getting opinions, I think I am free to speak my mind, and I hope I will do so without giving offence to nobody. Each man sees things different, and if I can't see 'em your way, that may not prove you are wrong ; but I've got to tell you how I see 'em, or else jest sit here and keep quiet.

"This church was organized for the worship of God and for the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. It ain't no shop. It wasn't got up for trade, or for driving bargains. It's a place where sinners and saints come to pray ; the saints to git comfort from the preached Word, while the sinners git conversion—at least we hope they'll git it. The church, then, is really a kind of little heaven here below, and when a man comes into it he surely ought to leave worldly things on the outside. Worshipping and dickering ain't got nothing in common. That's the way it strikes n.e.

"Now it seems to me," continued Davis, "that such an organization as that oughtn't to go into the eating-house business, or try to sell notions. When you have an oyster-supper for the benefit of the church—and mind you, I don't make no wry faces at oyster-suppers, just regarded as oyster-suppers—I put it to you, brethern, if it isn't just the same as saying to the outside world lying in wickedness, 'Come and help the work of spreading the glorious Gospel-tidings by stuffing your digestive organs with oysters that you'll have to pay more for, and less of 'em, than you can get anywhere else?' That's not my idea of the way pure religion's going to be spread from pole to pole. If you can bring a man to realize that he is a sinner by selling him for a quarter in the sanctuary an oyster-stew, about half as good as he can buy in an irreligious place down the street for fifteen cents, you tell me how the thing works, and I'll sit right down and hold my peace.

"And as for fairs—well, brethern, I don't want to speak nothing harsh against fairs, but it really does seem to me that folks that have a high spiritual calling oughtn't to combine religious purposes with the business of working off pin-cushions and doll-babies, and candy and lemonade, and pie, and perfectly useless fancy work on kind-hearted neighbours who are still in bondage to their sins.

"A magic-lantern show ain't much better, although there is no particular objection to it, as a show, any more than there is to a concert, which I always like to hear, though I ain't got no ear for music. But what I don't like," said Davis, earnestly, "is trying to raise money by any plan that says to a man: 'Give your dollars to religion, and you'll get 'em back quick in the shape of something you can carry home in your pocket or your digestive tract.' Brethern, I think the only way to pay off that mortgage is for you and me to go down into our pockets and to give the last dollar we can spare.

"Now, I've done a good deal of talking, and maybe I've hurt somebody's feelings, and I'm sorry if I have. But so's there won't be jest talk, so's I won't seem to

give advice I ain't willing to take, I say here and now that I'll subscribe fifty dollars to the fund."

There was silence when Davis resumed his seat. He looked flushed and excited, but he had the air of a man who had done his duty.

After an interval of a few moments, to the astonishment of everybody, Judge McGann slowly arose and said:

"I will give one hundred dollars."

The congregation smiled. The feeling was that the judge would have to borrow the money to make his promise good; but Hamilton knew where the contribution would come from.

Puella Bluitt rose to say that she and Captain Bluitt together would give one hundred dollars.

Then the subscriptions stopped for a time.

Presently, Trustee Johnson, who had political affiliations, stood up and said:

"Two or three days ago I asked Colonel Bly for a contribution to the church, and he promised me a hundred dollars. I think I may report this now."

Colonel Bly was the Democratic leader of the state, and more than suspected of crooked practices.

When Trustee Johnson resumed his seat, Davis Cook stood up again and said:

"I know you don't want to hear me any more, and I don't want to speak any more, but there is times when, as the Bible says—I think it is the Bible—a man must cry aloud. As I said a while ago, gift-money is the only kind of money a church ought to touch—money presented as a free-will offering from the sheep to the Shepherd. Now, all the money we've got to-night, up to a certain point, is that kind of money. It is honest money, honestly earned by honest people. There ain't no dirt on it, and the people who give it are the Lord's own people. But I want to say that that last subscription—I mean no offence to brother Johnson—ain't that kind of money. It ain't for me to say where the giver got it from, though there are tough stories around about his operations. All I know is he ain't been in business

since he was born, and he's got himself rich, and if he done it honest, he knows more than any other honest man on this here earth. I don't lay down no law for you, brethern, but I lay it down for Davis Cook, when I say I'd rather put another mortgage on the church, than to lift this one with money from a man who appears to me to be serving the Devil a good deal harder than I am trying to serve the Lord."

These words provoked an angry remonstrance from Trustee Johnson, who rebuked Davis Cook severely for slandering his neighbour. After some further discussion of the subject, a vote was taken, and the congregation, by a considerable majority, decided to accept Colonel Bly's money.

Then the meeting adjourned; and as John Hamilton walked home with his wife (Lochinvar taking care that Dorothea did not fail of an escort), Mrs. Hamilton said to her husband:

"I think Davis Cook is right. I do not like fairs and suppers for the help of religious objects; and I doubt if we should take Colonel Bly's money."

"Maybe not," replied Hamilton.

"But where on earth, John, did Mr. McGann get the money with which to make that offering? I thought he was very, very poor?"

"I haven't the least idea," said Hamilton.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SLAVE-CATCHERS

WHEN John Blodgett reported to Mr. Metcalf's overseer the failure of the attempt to obtain possession of Becky Slifer by process of law, the overseer, after reflecting upon the matter for a few moments, said :

"We won't bother the squire about it. He will dislike to go to the lawyer's office and make affidavits and have trouble, and all that kind of thing. Can't you just kidnap the woman, and bring her along anyhow, without bothering with the law?"

"I suppose I can," answered Blodgett, "but you know it isn't the same thing up there in a free state as it is here. Most of the people will keep hands off, but some of them abolitionists are always around, and always ready to meddle, and they may make trouble."

"Well, the five hundred dollars reward is still open to the man that gets the woman, and you might as well have it if you've got nerve enough to take her."

"I can do it if any man can."

"How will it answer to let the thing lay quiet for a while, until the excitement blows over, and Becky is off her guard, and then take a couple of good men with you, and seize her some night when she is out, and hurry her over the state line?"

"All right. I'll undertake it, and if I can get my hands on her again that will end it. I'll take no more chances with her."

Thus it was well on towards summer-time, in the

early days of June, when Blodgett came again to Turley with two companions, practised slave-catchers, Jim English and Henry Wild. They made their headquarters at a small hotel in the town, and Blodgett remained indoors in the day-time, fearing to be recognized.

English and Wild made observations of Captain Bluitt's house, and of Becky's habits of going in and out. They soon discovered that the negress was permitted to have each week one evening to herself, and that her practice was to visit the house of Dr. Quelch, where, among the servants, she found congenial companions. Blodgett resolved to take her upon the public highway upon her return from one of these visits.

Fortunately for his purpose it happened that the very next night when Becky had leave of absence from home was clear, with the moon at the full.

Captain Bluitt's house was watched, and the woman was seen to go out towards Dr. Quelch's. She was followed at a distance, and she entered the doctor's kitchen.

The conspirators thought the task now easy enough if Becky should come back alone, and if the road should be free from travellers when she returned.

Blodgett rode on horseback, carrying some small, strong cord, and Wild and English accompanied him on foot.

About half-way down the road leading towards the house of the physician was a grove, not large, but dense enough to supply a perfectly obscure hiding-place upon a night so lustrous, and the wood opened directly into the road, there being no fence and no hedge, such as lined the road on both sides for more than a mile, excepting at this point.

The nearest house upon the highway was almost half-a-mile distant, and a nearer house beyond the grove was not accessible, except by going around the wood for a considerable distance.

Blodgett rode in among the trees, dismounted, tied his horse, and seated himself with his companions upon a log from which could be seen distinctly the highway,

until it turned to the right at a distance of three or four hundred yards.

Becky was not accustomed to remain out to a late hour. Captain Bluitt required her to be home at ten o'clock, and she was more likely to be earlier than later in reaching the house.

The men who watched for her sat smoking and talking in low tones for less than an hour, when English said:

"I think she's a-comin'."

The other two men looked down the road.

"It's a woman, anyhow," said Blodgett.

"And she's alone," added Wild.

"Alone," said Blodgett, "and not another human being in sight. We're in luck to-night, sure; and this bright moonlight too!"

"Will she fight?" asked Wild.

"She'll fight like a devil," said Blodgett; "but I guess we'll soon take the fight out of her."

"I don't believe she's armed," said English.

"No, I don't think so," replied Blodgett, "but you can't tell for sure. She's a lively nigger—built different from most niggers, like a wild-cat. Better keep your eye open for a weapon."

"Here she comes," said Wild. "That's the woman. I know her walk and her build. Have you got the rope?"

"I have it," said Blodgett. "Jim, you grab her arms, and while she struggles, I'll get in behind her and trip her. Clap something over her mouth as near at the very start as you can. She'll holler."

The men crept to the edge of the wood, and placed themselves behind trees. The moon threw the shadows of the trees for a distance of four or five feet upon the road.

Becky came along walking sharply, and without singing, as people of her race were used to do when they passed on the roads at night.

As she neared the wood she took the other side of the way, keeping well in towards the hedge. She quickened her pace also; the dread of capture was always in her mind.

The three men dashed across the road towards her, without uttering a word. She started to run, but, finding that she could not escape in that way, she turned, drew a long, sharp-pointed kitchen-knife from the folds of her frock and backed up against the hedge.

Then she screamed for help.

"Quick, boys!" exclaimed Blodgett.

Wild thrust himself upon her, and tried to seize the arm that held the knife. English assailed her upon the other side. Both were wary, but bold. As the negress made a pass at Wild, English took hold of her left arm. Swiftly her right arm swept around, and the knife went into his shoulder.

Wild improved the chance to seize her right arm, and before she could transfer the knife to the other hand or could shake him loose, Blodgett behind her tripped her, and she fell forward upon her face.

The three men leaped upon her while she fought with desperate fury, twisting her body, dashing her knife in one direction and the other, and crying still for help.

"Get that knife!" said Blodgett, and Wild gave her arm a kick that paralyzed it. "Now we'll stop her hollerin'," said Blodgett, as he took off his coat, threw it over the woman's head, and tied it about her face.

English held her head down, and Wild sat upon her arm, while Blodgett sat upon her body. Taking a cord from his pocket, he brought Becky's arms behind her back, and tied them tightly at the elbows and at the wrists. Then he tied her feet.

"Now, boys," he said, "stand her up while I gag her." He produced a bit of hard wood tied at the ends with stout cords, and as Becky was lifted, still struggling, but helpless, the coat was removed from her head, the bit inserted, and the cord fastened about her head and neck. The bit was forced so far back in her mouth, and was tied so tightly, that her lips and tongue were lacerated.

When she had been so completely secured that resistance was useless, Blodgett put a rope about her neck, with a slip-knot, and handed the rope to Wild. Then he cut the cord that bound the woman's feet, and said:

"Now come along, you cursed nigger! We'll put you where you'll make no more trouble. Did she hurt you much, Jim?" he asked of English as the party, with Becky following them at the rope's end, walked over to the road.

"Didn't cut very deep," answered English. "I'll strip off and tie it up."

"All right, then," said Blodgett. "You and Wild stay and dress the wound, and I'll hurry on with the gal."

He handed money to English.

"There's what I promised, and I'll give you more for the cut if I get her home safe and pocket the reward. I'll be back here again, boys, not later than Friday of next week, and I will meet you at Goshern's tavern. Hold her for a minute, Harry."

English took the rope that held Becky captive, while Blodgett unhitched his horse. Leading the horse to the highway Blodgett mounted. Then tying the rope to the pommel of his saddle, he said:

"I guess it's safe enough to push on, boys. Nobody is about, but I don't care much if anybody does see me. I've got the gal, and I've got a right to have her. I'll go down as far as the Red Horse to-night and get a wagon there to drive her home. Good-bye. Much obliged for your help. Now, Becky, you just trot."

Blodgett started down the road. The woman followed him without contest. It was not her way to fight when fighting was useless. She still hoped either to work her hands free, or meet some one who would interfere in her behalf.

"So you thought you'd like to be free, did you?" said Blodgett as he pushed along. He did not take even the trouble to turn his head to speak to her. "Well, I guess your master 'll put you where you won't stand much chance of freedom. The rice-swamp's the place for cantankerous niggers like you."

Becky walked along, with her dress torn and dust-grimed, without the turban that had been lost in the fray, with blood dropping from her mouth, and with

agonizing pain in the arm which had been kicked by Wild. But, beaten and helpless as she was, her spirit was undaunted. If Blodgett could have looked into her face, he would have seen her eyes blazing with rage. Woe to the man who should come near to her when her hands should be untied. She resolved again, as she had resolved often before, that if there were no other way of escape from return to slavery she would commit self-murder.

Blodgett could not proceed faster than a walk, but his horse stepped quickly, and Becky could with difficulty keep pace with him.

"Here, gall!" said Blodgett, pulling at the rope roughly, "don't you drag that way. Step out lively now, or it'll be the worse for you!"

Becky made up her mind that if she must die, that man who led her as if she were a brute beast should die also, if he were anywhere within her reach.

A moment later she heard the sound of wheels. A faint gleam of hope shone into her mind. She knew that the chances were more than even that no passer-by would dare to help her, but there was some chance.

Dr. Quelch had occasion to visit Turley that night before ten o'clock. His old grey horse turned from the lane to the turnpike almost of his own accord. The doctor sat back in his buggy trusting the horse to keep the middle of the way, as he had been trained to do, and the lines hung slack in the physician's hand, while his thoughts wandered over some subject that for the moment engaged his attention.

As the horse jogged along and the doctor meditated, the doctor was brought out of his contemplative mood with suddenness. He was astonished to perceive ahead of him and coming towards him, plainly visible in the white light, a man on horseback, followed by a woman apparently with a rope about her neck. For a fractional part of a second the spectacle puzzled him. Then the meaning of it flashed upon his mind, and he needed no other impulse to action.

Compelling his horse to walk, and sitting far back in

his buggy, so that his face could not be seen, he took out his penknife, and slowly approached the horseman and his captive. Blodgett feared little from the occupant of the buggy, whoever he might be. He felt fully able to take care of himself and of his prey; the sentiment of the community was always against the runaway slave.

Dr. Quelch made as if he would drive past the two persons, but, as he got abreast of Becky, he leaped out, cut the cord about her neck, that which bound her hands, and that which held the gag in her mouth.

Becky had recognized the horse before it came near. She had expected help if the doctor were in the buggy, as she felt sure he was.

Before Blodgett could fully grasp the changed situation, before he could utter a word, the freed woman leaped at him, dragged him from his horse, flung him upon the ground, and fastened her hands upon his throat. He struggled ineffectually. He had a pistol, but he could not reach it. She would have killed him, but for Dr. Quelch.

"Becky, Becky!" said the doctor, seizing her and trying to pull her away from her victim.

Releasing his throat, the woman beat Blodgett in the face until she almost blinded him. Dr. Quelch pulled her away. "Get into my carriage, quick," he said to her. She obeyed.

Blodgett rose, wild with rage, and put his hand down to get his pistol.

"Stop!" said the doctor with a stern voice, "don't you dare to threaten me with a pistol, or I'll have you in jail within an hour for kidnapping."

"That woman's a runaway slave, and I am authorized to take her to her owner, and I'm going to do it too."

"No," said the doctor. "No, you're not going to touch her. She is going with me until the law gives her up. You have no right to touch her."

"Right enough," said Blodgett, "her master told me to take her."

"All I know about it," said the physician, "is that you are trying to kidnap a woman who is living in a

free community. That is a crime in this state, and if you attempt to make an assault upon her or me, that will be another crime, and I will hold you responsible for it. Now you go your way, and I will go mine," said the doctor, getting into the buggy and turning the horse about.

Blodgett's horse had walked away and was now standing, nibbling the grass, a hundred yards from him, in the direction of the town. As Dr. Quelch drove away with Becky, Blodgett cursed him volubly, and then, with the dejection of a man who has lost the game, started down the road to secure his horse.

Dr. Quelch drove to his own house, and on the way Becky related the particulars of her capture.

"Very well," said the doctor, when the story was done, "you must take no more chances of that kind. You shall stay with me, and I will tell Captain Bluitt of the matter. I have work to do that you can do better than any one else. You must not go back to Turley."

When Becky had been deposited at the house, Dr. Quelch turned about again and drove to Turley, where he completed his errand. Blodgett met Wild and English at the hotel, and in spite of the plea made by Blodgett that another attempt should be made to take the woman, there was final agreement that the project must be abandoned.

Becky, under the direction of Dr. Quelch, was to begin a career as an agent of the Underground Railroad, which did not end until she had led nearly one hundred slaves from bondage in the south to freedom in the north.

Upon the morning following the capture and rescue of Becky, it became the duty of Dr. Quelch to visit Captain Bluitt and Miss Bluitt, to inform them of the facts, and to let them know that their faithful servant would return to them no more.

When Dr. Quelch told how Becky had been tied and gagged, and had been almost throttled by a rope, Miss Bluitt could not fully express her indignation.

"How perfectly horrible, Doctor Quelch, to drag a woman along the public road as if she were being led

to the scaffold! Cannot the constitution of the United States be amended to prevent such outrages as that?"

"I am afraid not," answered the doctor.

"Well, but there really must be a writ of *habeas corpus*, or *nisi prius*, or something of that kind, to put a stop to such scandals, or it is useless for us to talk about having a free country."

"This is not a free country, Miss Bluitt," said the physician gravely. "This is a slave country."

"The Romans in their worst days never dragged women about with ropes on their necks," remarked Captain Bluitt.

"But why then teach children to sing about 'The land of the free, and the home of the brave'? Why have the boys taught to declaim Patrick Henry's speech about 'Give me liberty, or give me death'?"

"Those things are for white people, not for negroes," said the doctor. "Some day God will judge the nation that preaches lies, and treats a black man as if he were lower than a brute."

"And what on earth we are going to do for a kitchen woman I don't know," said Miss Bluitt anxiously, as her mind drifted off from politics and poetry to domestic economy. "We shall never again, I fear, have another cook who will equal Becky for corn bread and grilled ham, never! But it was right for you, doctor, to take her away to a place of safety. Her life wouldn't be secure here."

When Dr. Quelch had gone, Miss Bluitt discussed the situation with her brother, and an agreement was reached that while active effort was made to obtain the services of a person who should take permanently the vacant place in the kitchen, the wife of Rufus Potter should be invited, and well paid, to prepare the meals for the household.

It was not quite certain that Mrs. Potter's methods of dealing with grilled ham, or of projecting waffles into the dining-room, were equal to those employed by Rebecca Slifer, and the heart of Miss Bluitt sank within her one morning as she looked upon the pone-muffins

fabricated by Hannah, and then permitted her mind to drift backward to the muffins born of the loftier culinary genius of Rebecca; but, upon the whole, Mrs. Potter did very well indeed. Certainly in the mere matter of celerity, she far surpassed Becky; she moved at least eight inches where Becky would have moved one; and her energy was actually not less than surprising. She prepared the meals at her own home, while making ready those at Captain Bluit's house, and she always had the whole six of them ready at the right hours, so that Miss Bluit felt sure Mrs. Potter could have cooked ninety meals a day without losing her presence of mind, if such a demand had suddenly been made upon her remarkable resources.

One day, after dinner, while Captain Bluit was sitting in his library looking over some papers, Hannah Potter knocked upon the door and came in, holding one corner of her very clean apron, which she seemed to have been using to wipe the tears from her eyes.

Courtesying, and manifesting embarrassment which only strong emotion permitted her to overcome, she said:

"Cap'n Bluit, if you please, sir, may I have permission, sir, to speak to you for a moment about a matter that is wringing a mother's heart until it bleeds, and that'll bring my hairs down in bitter sorrow to the grave, unless something shall be speedily done to check it?"

"Why, certainly, Hannah, what is it?"

"Well, Cap'n Bluit, that dear darling boy of mine, Samuel (who I would have called Lionel instead of the horrid name of Samuel, if Rufus had been willing—which he wasn't, because he said the name of Lionel put him in mind of a menagerie) is only a mere babe as it were, Cap'n Bluit, not fit to go far beyond his loving mother's apron-strings, where she can watch over him and protect him, and guide his infant footsteps; and the idea of that child, hardly old enough to be trusted out of the sight of his fond parents' eyes, going to face the awful terrors of the great deep, simply unnerves me till I'm as limp as a rag, Cap'n Bluit."

"Does Sammy want to go to sea?"

"To the roaring, rolling sea, that mite of a boy who only the other day, it seems to me, was laying in long clothes in his cradle, hardly able to take notice, let alone walking! That little bit of a child has heard his dear father talking often and often of his perilous feats upon the masts of the tossing ships, and of his hair-breadth escapes amid the tumultuous billows, until he's just clean crazy, young as he is, to go as a sailor and face the howling tempest for himself. I told Rufus many's the time that he'd make that dear child discontented with his happy home, hearing his father depicting in such vivid terms the startling nature of the wild adventures he had been through and seen; but Rufus, he would do it, and now the fatal consequences have come at last, and that mere speck of a baby says he'll run away and become a hardy mariner, unless I'll give him leave to go, which I won't, because I should simply break my heart in twain if I did."

Mrs. Potter began to cry.

"How old is Samuel?" asked Captain Bluitt.

"Just past fifteen, going on sixteen, which he will be on the fourteenth day of July next, and it would be actually wicked for so young a boy and so tender to be allowed to go wandering among brutal strangers all over the earth, and the wild waste of waters, tearing his mother's heart-strings; and so I thought maybe, good Cap'n Bluitt, who was a mariner once yourself, and so as a consequence knows how hard and dangerous the life is, and wholly unfit for a small atom of a child that has hardly got the taste of the nursing-bottle out of his mouth, would speak to him and discourage him, and show him how inexpedient it would be for him to fly from the arms of his loving mother to the stormy ocean. Won't you please, please speak to him, Cap'n Bluitt?"

"Send him over to me," said the captain. "I'll talk him out of it."

Mrs. Potter went away, and in a few moments Samuel Potter entered the room, holding in his hands a battered straw hat, the rim of which he persistently nibbled. He was a stout, rosy fellow, who looked as if he could



"Samuel Potter entered the room."
Captain Blufft

THE SLAVE-CATCHERS

manage to remain in a tolerably healthy condition under the stress of hardship.

"Sit down there, my son," said Captain Bluit, pointing to a chair.

"Sammy, my boy," observed the captain, "you're a fine young fellow, and now that you are growing up to be a man, let me tell you that you want to start right. If you start right you will go right. If you start wrong you will go wrong. Say you want to go to Peru, don't start due north. If you want to go to Jerusalem, don't take the dirt road for Sodom.

"Now they tell me you want to be a sailor, my son. Is that so?"

"Yessir."

"Very well, then; going to become a sailor. I was that way once. I wanted to be a sailor, and as I had no sense I went to sea. I was a boy just like you, and I thought I'd have lots of fun. That's what you think, isn't it, Sammy?"

"Yessir."

"It's your idea you'd like to be out on the wide ocean, listening to the winds roaring and whistling through the rigging, and seeing the big waves bounding hither and thither, and the gulls a-flying in the tempest. That's the picture you have in your mind, isn't it, Sammy?"

"Yessir."

"Well, my son, you take my advice and drop it! I followed the sea twenty years and more, boy and man, and maybe had more luck than most sailors; but do you know, Sammy, what else I had?"

"A bully time, sir."

"No, my son; that's where you're mistaken. I had a hard time. It's a life not fit for a dog, let alone a human being. How'll you like standing watch on a wet deck in the dead of night with the ship rolling and pitching and you wet to the skin, or taking a turn at the wheel in the black darkness or the blind fog, when you can't see a hand's length in front of you, or running up the rigging when every lurch you think she'll send you overboard? How'll you like that, Sammy?"

"Fus'-rate, sir!"

"You're mistaken, my boy. You think you will. You let your imagination play with it. But you won't like the cold fact. There's no nice warm bed for you to sleep in, and no good cooked things to eat. Only a bunk to roll about in without any mattress, and fat pork and crackers and things like that."

"I always liked pork, sir."

"And then, Samuel, it's dreadful to think of a fine boy like you sailing about in those deadly hot climates, getting fevers and things, and the first thing the cannibals will swoop down on you and catch you, and there you'll be, with savages skewering you up and cooking you for dinner when you might have been at home, if you had been a good boy, eating your own dinner with your mother's love around you. Be warned in time, my son?"

"I'd like to see a real cannibal, sir."

"Yes, Sammy, and a live cannibal would like to see you, a stout, well-favoured boy, with fat on him. But supposing you escape the cannibals and the fevers, still there's the sharks always following the ship, and hungry for boys. The chances are two to one you'll fall overboard, and then they'll snap you in half before you can get your breath."

"Real sharks?"

"Yes, terrible fellows, with teeth like a rip-saw, and never eat anything else when they can get boys. And even if the sharks don't get you, you're almost certain to be wrecked some time and cast on a desert island, with no clothes on you, and nothing or next to nothing to eat, and only rain-water to drink. And maybe there you'll live and live and live, perhaps for years, and never see the face of a human being, and keep alive by catching fish and oysters, and wishing you were safe in your dear mother's arms. Keep away from it, my son! Keep away from it!"

"I'd have Friday with me."

"Friday? What Friday? How do you mean?"

"Just like Robinson Crusoe."

"Now, Samuel, that is just fiction. No shipwrecked mariner ever had such luck as that man. It's against reason. It's wicked to deceive boys with books like that. A sailor's life, my boy, is always hard. There's no poetry in it, even if he does go about seeing foreign countries, and London, and Bombay where the turbaned Hindoos are, and Naples. Ah, Sammy, there's a place! Naples! Why, my son, I judge the Bay of Naples is the loveliest spot on the earth, with the great volcano smoking away and the blue water and the blue sky. It's just fine! But you want to wait till you're grown up and rich, and can go there comfortably, not as a sailor with a mate to kick you and swear at you."

"Does the volcano send out fire?" asked Sammy.

"Sometimes, I suppose. But most likely you'd never go near it. Your luck would be to go out in the Pacific among the islands, where the people go without clothes—just pure heathens—and live on bread-fruit and cocoanuts."

Sammy's eyes glistened.

"And then there's the pirates out among those very islands. You go sailing along, when all of a sudden a schooner appears flying a black flag with skull and cross-bones. They fire into you and bring you to, and make you a prisoner, and the first thing, you know, they make you walk the plank, and where are you then, Sammy? Where are you then, when you might be at home in your loving mother's bosom?"

"They won't do that to me, sir."

"Why not, my son? Why not?"

"I'd join 'em."

"Join them! Become a pirate, Samuel! Do you think that would be starting right, Samuel, and you a good Sunday School boy, brought up in the way you should go in the hope that when you are old you would not depart from it?"

"Splendid, sir! I'd a great deal rather be a pirate than a minister."

"Well, well! It's really almost beyond belief that a boy who has had sound Presbyterian influences around

him from infancy, should have yearnings for piracy! It's little short of scandalous, Samuel!"

"Mother says you went to Rome," said Sammy. "I'd like to go there and see it."

This was Captain Bluitt's tender point.

"And well you may, my son. Well you may. But you can't see it if you go as a sailor."

"Is it anywheres near the Dead Sea, sir?"

"What's that? What? Near the Dead Sea? Why, Samuel, where did you learn about the Dead Sea?"

"Sunday School, sir. Mrs. Frobisher came up and drew it on the black-board."

"Told you it was near Rome, did she?"

"I dunno, sir."

"Well now, my son, take my advice and don't go to sea, but if you ever should go, and you should arrange to sail up to Rome by way of the Dead Sea, I want you to write out a full account of the trip, and mail me home a letter about it. Yes, Sammy, that's going to be the most remarkable voyage on record."

"Don't you go that way, sir?"

"You *can* go that way, if you've actually made up your mind to do it; if you are set on it; yes, it is possible, I should think, but I wouldn't make that way the first choice, not if I were fond of travelling along bee-lines. What you want, Samuel, is to go to school and lay your mind alongside your geography lessons. Do you understand Latin?"

"No, sir, not much."

"Well, my son, I don't know so very much about it myself, but there's an old Roman proverb that exactly expresses my idea of a boy that goes to sea. *Dum vivimus vivamus*, or, too dumb to live. That's what I think who followed the sea all my life. Now you go home to your mother and be a good boy, and try to get to be a railroad conductor, or an auctioneer, or something that'll let you stay on dry land."

Sammy withdrew; and that night he ran away from home and, in the great city, shipped as cabin-boy on a brig bound for Liverpool.

CHAPTER XVII

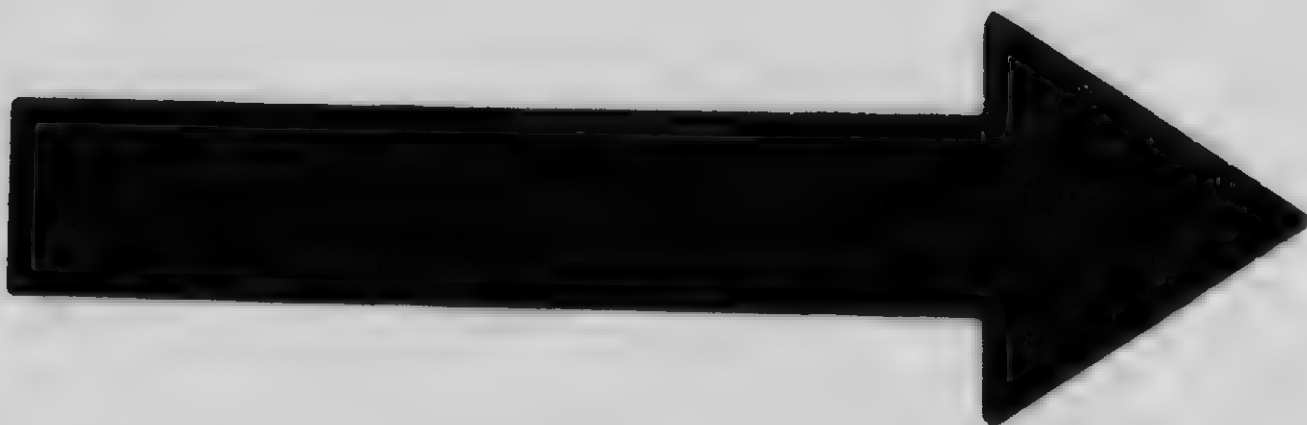
THROUGH THE WAY OF THE WILDERNESS

"HE led them through the way of the wilderness." Often it is a hard and bitter journey, with much wandering and stumbling and hunger and thirst; but the Power that prepared the highways of Life, seems to have arranged that the finger-posts along the primrose paths shall rarely point to the Promised Land.

If love at its very best be indeed Love Triumphant, then there must be difficulty as the preliminary of conquest; there must be pang if felicity is to have the acuteness of ecstasy. If Sorrow's crown of Sorrow be remembering happier things, must it not be that the very crown of Joy, as one stands upon the mountain-top in the serene atmosphere of victory, is remembrance of the travail of the dreary journey across the desert?

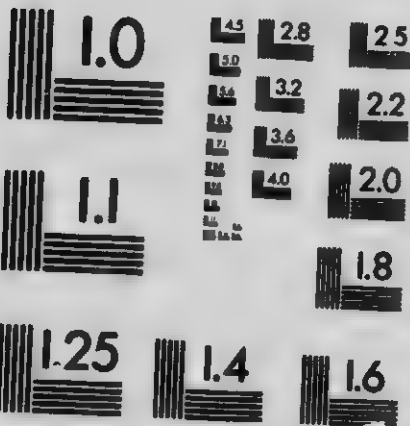
The flowery bed of ease is never lifted heavenward; everything worth having costs, and the price paid for the highest things usually has in it some flavour of anguish. There is a strange kind of sweetness even in sorrow; and that human nature has some subtle craving for it, though we shrink from pain, is proved by the familiar fact that lovers who find Fate disposed to make their pathway smooth and to cover it with radiance, will have a pretext for a quarrel now and then, so that there may be periods of gloom which will make the sunshine seem more glorious when it comes again.

But these lovers who wooed and cooed in old Turley had no need to conjure trouble, or to pretend that there



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were giants in a way that was actually free from terrors and molestations. The monster that confronted them was a forbidding reality in the shape of a father, the only other man whom the heroine loved, and who felt himself impelled to deal with this case of passionate affection, as he might have done if his daughter had been a babe with a fancy for a kitten.

Much, no doubt, might be done for the amelioration of the condition of suffering lovers if Nature had displayed larger benevolence in providing for the benignancy of fathers. Why a grizzled parent should so often be permitted to believe that he knows what will gratify the cravings of the soul of the heroine better than she herself knows, is a hidden mystery, unless confession shall be made that the grey head is not always filled with wisdom, and that to some unfortunate men, as years roll by, love's young dream gradually takes on aspects of nightmare.

There are fathers who have drifted so far away from all memory of youthful things that they incline to scoff at the theory that two kindred souls, made for each other, know each their own when they meet, and rush together with a passionateness of attraction, as if the forces of all the universe impelled them. Yes, there are men who will deliberately plot that daughters who want love as they want air, shall put it aside and discover if fortune and position will not answer reasonably well as substitutes.

When fables are to be manufactured, a man who has a lively fancy can stir the blood of the reader and set his heart a-beating, and supply him with excitement almost up to the point of delirium, if the tribulations of lovers are to be described; but, alas! what shall be done with the plain and prosy facts as frowning Fate, disregarding human fondness for pictures of lively adventure, prepared them for the boy and the girl who met, and loved, and suffered, and wept in Turley?

Sweet she was, indeed, and holy, if the pure soul be holy; but she was not romantic. She was a gentle, shrinking girl, to whom obedience to her parents had

become a fixed, sacred habit; and who would have looked with dread, not unmingled with feelings of horror, upon anything that would have disturbed her father, or would have made her the theme of gossip in the community. She would have made every sacrifice for Walter Drury that involved herself alone; but sacrifice that would tear asunder the ties that bound her to her parents and to their domestic peace—that she could not make easily.

And so it came to pass that the way along which they had sauntered hand in hand thus far with unbroken happiness, was at last become so dark and rough and difficult, that they must halt until the shining path once more should be defined.

Walter had thought that when the golden summer came again, he should have a fortnight's holiday which he would spend in Turley, a guest in his uncle's house; and he dreamed of other voyages upon the river in that boat which had once carried a full cargo of happiness; of strolls along the beach in the evenings; of drives over the roads where there had been chestnut-hunting, and of church services whereat he should hear nothing but the voice of one singer; but these things were not to be.

One Sunday morning in the early summer, he could not restrain himself from taking the train and coming to Turley, even though he must go back again before night-fall. Letters are delightful, but eye to eye is better. And so, when he left the train at Turley station, he hurried toward the church, and found that service had begun.

Stopping in the vestibule before entering the building, he discovered that some ceremony, not usual upon Sunday morning, was in progression within, and finding Uncle Tarsel by the open door, he asked him what was going on.

"Baptizin', Mars. Drury."

"Baptizing, eh?"

"Yes, suh, dey calls it dat, but dat ain' no real baptizin'."

Uncle Tarsel, serving in the Presbyterian church, was a member of the Baptist Society.

"It isn't?" replied Walter. "Why not?"

"It ain' no baptizin' fer no coloured man, nohow. What good is it to sprinkle a liddle water on a brack man when you kin hardly git de tole repravity outen him by puttin' him in de creek an' summergin' him? No use fo' niggers! Didden King Naaman go into de water seben times befo' he was clean? chock in an' unner, ober his head? Didden de Utopian Eunuch go down in twel de deep water? Ef sprinklin' would a' done he could a' set solid in his chariot an' nebber tuk his clothes off once! A liddle spatterin' o' rain won't wash no man! When he gits religion he wants to hunt fo' a swimmin' hole an' touch bottom and come up agin."

Walter, indifferent at that moment to the questions involved in the subject, left the old negro and went around to the door at which he had entered the church on that memorable Sunday of his first visit.

He took the same seat, and was full of joy that Dorothea saw him at once, and smiled as she saw him.

The singing that morning seemed to him to have heavenly beauty, and indeed as she saw him there and loved him, and knew that he listened with passionate delight, she had such inspiration to sing as she had never had before. It was lovely to sing, not only because he was there, but because deep down in her devout soul was a sentiment of gratitude to the Being who had given to her such happiness, and had made the love of His children for one another so pure and holy and heavenly.

She heard the sermon and looked at the preacher, though she turned her eyes now and then upon him; but for him there was no minister and no discourse. He saw only her, and cared only for her, and as he looked and looked across the pews and the aisles, and saw her sweet face, he loved her more and more dearly.

When service was ended, she met him at the door,

and he began to walk down the street with her. Young Frobisher accompanied them to the corner, where he said good-bye, and went home with a strong resolution to express his feelings to Miss Hamilton at an early moment, in defiance of the fate that restricted the dimensions of his salary.

Walter left Dorothea at the door of her home, agreeing to call for her in the afternoon, that they might take a walk together.

And so when the day was older they strolled down the street, and then along the broad pathway in the shade of the great trees, where they overhung the bank of the river.

It was a lovely June day, and there were boats upon the stream near to the shore, while further away in the channel a ship drawn by a little tug-boat went gliding up the stream, and a steam-boat ploughed its way through the waters. The sunshine made the scene more beautiful, and even strict Presbyterian principles barely availed to restrain the lovers from venturing out once more in Captain Bluitt's row-boat.

As they walked to and fro, or sat for a while upon one of the benches placed here and there upon the sward between the pathway and the verge of the bank, Walter pleaded with Dorothea that they might arrange for marriage upon a day not too far distant.

"The situation, dear," he said, "is unpleasant for both of us. I have not spoken to your father; he and your mother do not make me a welcome visitor to your house; our engagement has never been announced. It is not the right way. The matter must be dealt with sooner or later, and why not now?"

"I am afraid," she said. "Mother does not know that we are engaged to be married, though I told her that we had confessed our love to each other. She did not disapprove, but father, when she told him, did. I do not believe he will give his consent easily."

"Why should he withhold it? He cannot have any good reason."

"No, but father has seemed strange sometimes of

late—not like himself. He is worrying about something, and it irritates him.”

“Still, he is a just man and a sensible man. It is my clear duty to speak to him. Then I shall learn what his objections are, and perhaps can remove them.”

“But, oh! Walter, what if he should forbid me to see you?”

“That is hardly possible, dear, I think. Why should he inflict pain upon his own daughter, just in pure wantonness? Perhaps some one has misrepresented me to him; no doubt I can straighten the matter out when I see him. It would be trying to you, wouldn’t it, if he should insist that you should not see me?”

“It would be terrible.”

“And not write to me?”

“I cannot bear to think of it.”

“Well, dearest, if it comes to that, you may have to choose between us.”

“Not to be unkind to my father, dear?”

“No, you must not be unkind to him; but if a father chooses, absolutely without any just pretext, to compel a daughter to discard the man she sincerely loves—well, Dorry, the situation is a familiar one. I suppose people view it in each case differently.”

“Let us not consider it now at all,” said Dorothea. “The mere thought of it is painful to me.”

“You are mine,” said Walter, “father or no father.”

“Yes,” she said in a gentle voice. “Yes, dear, I am yours. I cannot give you up.”

“No man shall take you from me, either,” answered Walter. “But, as you say, we need not deal with trouble until it comes to us; but it is not right that we should postpone the settlement of this matter because we fear trouble. I wish to be married. My income is large enough to start with. My character and conduct are good. I have excellent health. I do not think your father can discover any just cause for forbidding you to follow your inclination. I will speak to him this very week.”

“You will write to him to say that you are coming?”

"Yes, and I will write to you also. Would he be likely to stay at home Thursday evening?"

"I think so; but he will not go away if he knows you are coming. I shall be dreadfully nervous about it all the week, and on Thursday while you are in the house, how can I endure not seeing you?"

"Dorry," said Walter, as they turned homeward, "be assured that I will never give you up, never! so long as you continue to love me. I am positively certain that you are mine in a very high spiritual sense, and no human power, not even a father, shall separate us."

After church, on that Sunday night, and while Walter was sitting alone in his room in the great city, John Hamilton and his daughter were together in the library. Mrs. Hamilton had gone up-stairs, unwilling to be present.

"My daughter," said Hamilton, "you went out walking with young Drury this afternoon, didn't you?"

"Yes, father."

"You have been driving and rowing with him before, and he has paid you marked attentions for several months. He writes to you frequently?"

"Yes."

"These things were displeasing to me from the first. I never liked the man. I did not forbid you to go with him or to receive visits from him, because I disliked to deprive you of pleasure, but I could hardly have believed that your acquaintance with him would go any further than mere acquaintance. Now mother tells me that he has expressed himself seriously to you?"

"He has."

"And you have some regard for him and have told him so?"

"I love him."

"My daughter, this is very painful to me. I have always known you to be a girl of good judgment and sound sense, whom I could trust to act wisely in such matters; but I fear you have not shown wisdom in this case."

"In what particular, father?"

"Well, my dear, it is not easy to be perfectly explicit in such a matter. A young person without experience of the world cannot, even after an explanation, understand the view of an older person who has had large experience. A boy, if he could see himself as he will be forty years later, would not, for example, comprehend that older self; and so, you must simply accept my judgment that Drury is not a suitable person for you."

"You have really known very little of him, father."

"I know more than you suppose." It was mean for Hamilton to suggest that he had private information, when in fact he had none. "The moment I saw him I took his measure. I knew him for a man not worthy of such a girl as you."

"But I am not a child. You say that I have good judgment and sound sense. I know Walter well, and I am sure that he is a singularly high-minded man."

"Girls always have that notion about any one they happen to fancy. It is because they have no experience, and are governed by feeling. How many lives have been wrecked because sentiment has been permitted to blind women to the truth!"

"If you think Walter is unworthy, you must have some basis for the opinion, and you will tell me what it is?"

"Well, for one thing, he belongs with very plain, very common people. The Bluitts are accepted here because they have means and live well, and are inoffensive; but really they are not our social equals."

"Father, I think they are. They have some oddities, but they are thoroughly respectable, and in all Turley there is not a kinder-hearted or more upright man than Captain Bluitt."

"You know that Mrs. Frobisher and her friends regard them as their inferiors."

"It is not like you to say that, father. I know you think Mrs. Frobisher's family pretensions absurd."

"No, we have a right to be careful about such things, particularly where our children are concerned. If I

should permit you to receive this young man, you would have to be intimate with his relations."

"I should be perfectly satisfied."

"And who are his parents? I know nothing of them. What is his father's occupation?"

"Both of his parents are dead. His father was a merchant in the city. He failed in the panic of 1837, and died some years later, leaving nothing."

"Exactly! leaving nothing. The son has nothing. He has tried one business after another, and has succeeded in none."

"He has succeeded in journalism, succeeded wonderfully."

"But that is a miserable business. The pay is always poor. The occupation is precarious. I do not want my daughter to marry so that she shall be condemned to a life of poverty."

"Do you want to have her marry for money?"

"Well, not just that; but there are hundreds of attractive men who have wealth, and who would be delighted to have the chance to address you."

"Who are they?"

"Of course I do not care to designate any one of them."

"Suppose I should not want any of them?"

"My child, I am far from wishing you to take a sordid view of so important a matter, but one of the things we learn as we grow older is that our feelings may be largely controlled in such cases if we choose to control them."

Dorothea began to regard her father with less reverence than she had done. A feeling of bitterness sprang up in her mind.

"I might as well tell you plainly, father," she said, with reddened cheek, and a firm voice, "that I will never consent to marry any man but Walter Drury; and I must tell you also, that his income is almost as large as yours, and it will be larger."

Hamilton could hardly repress the sentiment of disgust and indignation with which he heard this declaration; but he said, coldly:

"Very well; then I must tell you, Jorry, with equal plainness, that I cannot give my consent to your affiliation with this young man, and I insist that your relations with him shall be broken off. That is my last word upon the subject."

Dorothea withdrew and went to her room to have a good cry.

On Thursday night Walter came down to Turley, and went to the Hamilton house with a purpose to perform a difficult task with courage, and yet, remembering that this man was dear to the woman he loved, with strong restraint upon tongue and temper.

"I have the girl," he said, remembering Uncle Bluitt's counsel, given to him almost a year ago, "and her father's feeling is very much a minor consideration."

John Hamilton received his visitor with politeness, but with marked coldness of demeanour. His mind was made up. He thought himself completely fortified against any argument that could be presented to him. He permitted Walter to present his case without any preliminary observations from him, the stern parent.

"Mr. Hamilton," said Walter, "you know the purpose of my visit. I have formed an attachment for Dorothea, which is reciprocated, and it is necessary that I should speak to you of it."

"Very necessary," observed Hamilton.

"We were attracted to each other the very first time we met, and I am sure there is complete and genuine devotion upon both sides."

Hamilton made no answer. He seemed to prefer that Walter should continue.

"I am in a good profession. I am successful. I have an income large enough for two young persons to begin life with. I am in sound health, and if you wish to make inquiry respecting my character, I shall be glad to refer you to persons who know me well."

"I have no such desire."

"You may have looked into the matter," said Walter. "If so, I am confident you obtained no evil report. I

now ask you, respectfully, to permit me to make Dorothea my wife."

"I cannot give my consent," said Hamilton.

"I am deeply sorry to hear you say so; but I will be frank and say that I had been warned of your disapproval of the marriage."

"I disapprove it positively and absolutely."

"As this is of very serious importance to your daughter and to me, and as in some degree it reflects upon me, may I ask that you will be good enough to tell me why you refuse your consent?"

"I think it to the best interest of my child that I should do so; that appears to me to be reason enough."

"Will you pardon me, Mr. Hamilton, if I say I think both she and I are entitled to a more specific statement of your objections? She is no longer a child; she is a woman; and it is not a light matter for either of us that even her father should interpose where her most sacred feelings, and mine, are deeply engaged."

"Young people often have such feelings more than once in their lives; and frequently exaggerate their strength and their importance. Dorothea is my own daughter, under my authority, and I do not fully admit the right of any one, any stranger, to demand my reasons for dealing with her in this way or in that way."

"I am far from venturing to question your rightful measure of authority with her, or her duty to pay respect to you; but surely you cannot be entirely indifferent to her wishes where her happiness—the happiness of her whole life—is involved."

"It is her happiness that I consider when I refuse my consent," said Hamilton, coldly.

"Do you think I can be indifferent to it?" asked Walter.

"Really I do not know."

"Mr. Hamilton, I ask you to tell me frankly, even if you shall hurt my feelings, why you make objection to me. I waive my pretence to a right to demand an answer. I earnestly beg you to give it to me."

"I do not like your family, I do not admire you, I think you are in a precarious business, and I consider you hardly deserving of such a wife as my daughter would make for a suitable man. There! since you insist upon an answer, and that I shall be perfectly candid, I tell you some of my objections."

Walter did not at once reply; but repressing his anger, at last he said:

"I dislike to make such comparisons, but I am compelled to say that my father's station in life was quite as high as yours; that my business is no more precarious than any other business or profession, and if Dorothea admires me, that seems really more important, under the circumstances, than that her father should do so."

"That is not my opinion."

"You would then have her suitor seek your favour first?"

"Young man," said Hamilton, looking hard at him, "I do not care to be subjected to an inquisition of just that kind."

Walter again reflected before speaking. Then he said:

"Are you willing that the matter of marriage should be left open for a time, and that I should see Dorothea sometimes and write to her? Perhaps when you know me better, you may change your opinion."

"No, I shall never change it. I wish you to discontinue at once all attention to my daughter."

"Do you mean that I shall give her up finally?"

"Yes."

"Do you not reflect that this would inflict terrible pain upon her?"

"I have fully considered the consequences."

"Nor that it may blast her life and mine?"

"Do not talk nonsense."

"Is it your irrevocable decision, then, that I must give her up?"

"It is."

"Well, I tell you plainly, I will not do it!"

Walter spoke sharply and rose from his chair.

Hamilton did not move.

"Yes, you will," he said.

"I will not! I will never give her up. I have tried to be courteous with you, because you are her father. I want to speak respectfully to you now; but a father's authority stops somewhere—your own father's authority over you came to an end, and your authority stops right here! I will marry Dorothea without your approval, if you will not be just enough to give it."

Hamilton rose and opened the door into the hall.

"Young man," he said, "don't come here again; don't attempt to see my daughter, and if you write to her in defiance of my prohibition, your letters will be returned."

Walter went out, wishing he dare strike the man, and with wild rage in his heart, walked to the river-bank where for an hour or more he paced to and fro, in a frenzy of anger and disappointment, wondering what next he should do.

He thought of a dozen wild projects for defying Dorothea's father, and for obtaining revenge for his insolence; but his judgment told him that he had better form no plans until he could have time for reflection. He must, however, see Dorothea and consult with her, and he resolved to write to Mrs. Burns that very night to ask her to invite Miss Hamilton to her house one afternoon of the succeeding week.

Walter entered his uncle's home, and after writing the note to Mrs. Burns, and obtaining from his aunt the promise that it should reach its destination in the morning, he related to Captain Bluitt and Miss Bluitt, in the few moments that were available before he must take the train for the city, the particulars of his interview with Hamilton.

They could hardly express their indignation.

"The idea," exclaimed Miss Bluitt, "of his daring to say that our family is not as good as his! They are nobodies! Literally nobodies!"

"Dorothea is somebody, aunt."

"I except her, and Mrs. Hamilton, too. But the father! It is perfectly scandalous for him to make such

high pretensions! Why, do you know what *his* father was?"

"Some kind of a barber or something, I think."

"Not a barber, Puella," said the captain. "He was a note and bill broker up in the city."

"You told me yourself, brother, that he shaved things, somehow."

"No! Florabella Burns said she heard somebody say he shaved notes."

"Very well, then; that's what I say. I knew he shaved something somewhere. It's all the same, and the idea of his son pretending to look down on Walter! You're too good for him, Walter."

"Not for Dorry," said Walter, smiling.

"No, no! she will make you a perfect wife, perfect! And you'll marry her, won't you, in spite of her horrid father?"

"Yes," replied Walter, "if she will have me."

"Well, she will, Wally," said the captain. "I know that angel girl well—indisputably an angel—and you needn't be afraid that she will give you up. As for John Hamilton—well, my boy, I told you I didn't like him, and now you can guess why. He is not my kind of a man—nor yours. Still, you must take your bearings right in dealing with him. You don't want to quarrel with your wife's father if you can help it, do you?"

"Surely not."

"You are his superior in every way," added the captain, as Walter rose to say good-bye, "and for him to make a fling at you about your family not being good enough: well, as Seneca said—or perhaps it was Scipio Africanus, or some one of those people over there—anyhow, some one of them said, *nascitur non fit*; and that's what I say: it's nasty and not fit! He ought to be ashamed of himself."

On Monday Walter received from Florabella Burns a letter telling him that Dorothea would be at Mrs. Burns's house on Thursday afternoon, and Mrs. Burns, unable to restrain an expression of sympathy for the victims of cruel wrong, added a postscript:

"You poor dear things! Isn't it horrid? Doesn't the man remember when he was in love himself? Come to her and wipe her weeping eyes! I will be a mother to you both."

When Walter on Thursday reached the dwelling of the sympathetic and consolatory Mrs. Burns, that lady met him almost at the door. She had been watching for him. She greeted him warmly, and then she said:

"You must really excuse me. I am right in the midst of a lot of sewing and other work. Go right in there and see D-rry."

When he had embraced her and kissed her, he retained her hand in his, and they sat together upon the sofa. He told her what her father had said to him, and as he spoke the tears came to her eyes. He saw that she had been weeping before he came.

"Oh, Walter!" she said, "what shall we do about it?"

"There are but three possible things to do, dear, so far as I can see. To run away, or to defy your father openly, or to give each other up."

"And we can do none of these, of course, can we?"

"I don't know," said Walter.

"Running away—why you would not wish me to do that, and have public scandal? We cannot consider that?"

"No; I should not be willing to adopt that plan; not now, at any rate."

"And I can't give you up?"

He leaned over and kissed her:

"It is not worth while even to discuss that."

"As for defying father—think what that would mean, dear, for me! I love him, and have always revered him, and never once before has he treated me with unkindness. If there should be a quarrel—oh, Walter, dear, I cannot bear even to think of a quarrel with my father!—it would give mother bitter sorrow; it would destroy our domestic happiness. Dear, there must be some other way of meeting this great trouble?"

"Can you think of one?"

"Why can we not simply wait? We are both young;

there is plenty of time. Something may happen to change father's mind."

"And meanwhile I am not to see you, or to hear from you, or to write to you?"

"Dreadful, isn't it?"

"Dorry," said Walter, "I should not mind waiting if we could correspond and sometimes meet; but to be thrust apart for no good reason, senselessly, and to be kept apart—that I am not willing to endure. You are no child. You are in your nineteenth year. Both law and custom make you independent of your parents."

"Yea, dear, I know it; but I can't throw aside my love for them, like an old garment."

"I do not wish to speak unkindly of your father, though he was most unkind to me; but, unless he can give some reason far better than he has given, either to you or me, why you should not be mine, he has no right, moral, civil or parental, to try to override your wishes."

"That is true, and I am sure he will see this, after a while, and withdraw his refusal. I told you that he had not been quite like himself lately."

"I don't believe he will change," said Walter. "He said he disliked me the first time he saw me, and I felt that he did. No, there is no hope in that direction. I am willing to do almost anything, but I am not willing to be cut off from all communication from you."

"Nor would it do, dear, to meet here, would it? I don't like clandestine meetings."

"Nor I. I have done nothing to be ashamed of. You are not ashamed of me; and I consider it unworthy of my self-respect and of yours that we should act stealthily and employ concealment, because your father is outrageously unjust."

"Even secret correspondence seems to be not quite honourable, Walter, does it?"

"No; but not quite so bad as secret meetings. If I were not afraid of a disgraceful scene, I would call to see you at your house, in spite of your father."

"No, dear, not that! Not now!"

"Well, Dorry, it looks to me as if you would have

to decide whether you care more for your father or for me."

"For you, my dearest; but I can't help caring for him also, and for mother; and what can I do?"

"I am not going to insist upon it, at this moment, at any rate; but I am inclined to think that we shall have to notify your father that we will be married, and then let him do his worst. What can he do?"

"He can make misery for me and for mother; and scandal, in the whole town. Walter, dear, I cannot bear that."

He was less considerate than he should have been. He was becoming impatient and losing his temper.

"Well, that is what is coming, if it must be. Sooner or later you will be compelled to choose between disobeying your father or dissolving your relations with me."

"Let us wait," she said, gently. "And now I must go. It will not do for me to stay longer. They will suspect me."

"Yes, suspect! There it is. You are treated as if you were a criminal."

As they rose, she put her arms about his neck and cried. He kissed her tenderly, and said:

"Forgive me, if I spoke harshly. We will wait, as you say. But I will write to you, and you will answer my letters?"

"Father has forbidden it, but——"

"But you *must* write to me," he said.

"I will think about it, dear, and try to determine what is right."

He kissed her again, and he went to the door with her; and as she walked away, Mrs. Burns came downstairs.

"Walter," she said, "you must not be impatient with Dorry. Wait a while, and the tangle will be straightened out, and you will love her more because you had this trouble."

Upon his way home in the train that night, Drury resolved that he would try patiently to bear the heavy

burden of separation put upon him by an unjust man—to bear it for a time, in the hope that some way would be discovered for removing the burden. But he also determined that he would write to Dorothea in defiance of her father's prohibition. To have no communication would be insupportable.

The next day he wrote a letter, and when John Hamilton took it from the post-office, he put it in his pocket and kept it there.

For nearly a week Walter waited with increasing impatience for an answer, and then he wrote again. This letter also found its way into Hamilton's pocket.

Receiving no reply, Walter wrote a third time, directing the letter to the care of Saul Tarsel, who he knew saw Dorothea at the church at least twice every week.

When Saul received the letter, he turned to find some one to read the address, and of course the man he turned to was Hamilton.

"That is mine," said Hamilton, "it is for my daughter. It is all right," and the letter went into his pocket.

Walter was angry and bitter, when, as the days ran by, he found that no response came to him.

"She will not write because her father forbids. She cares more for him than for me."

He thought to make another venture, and write a letter to be transmitted by Mrs. Burns, but he began to harden his heart. "If she loved me truly, she would write without waiting to hear from me."

He laughed scornfully as he thought of what she had said about loving him instantly. "The two souls made for each other, and that flew together, seem to be badly sundered now. Possibly, Frobisher, being on the ground, finds more favour than he did."

He was conscious that this was unjust, but he permitted his bitter humour to dominate him.

Man-like, he threw all the blame upon her, and pretended to thank himself the only martyr, and to contemplate his own suffering, as if she too did not suffer.

She would not write, for her father's sake, but she thought that if Walter should write to her she could not refuse to answer him. She waited for a letter, waited and waited through weeks of dreariness and heart-ache and bitter grief, but no line came to her from the man she loved.

The mother tried to comfort her, but she would not be comforted. Her father observed, but pretended not to notice her sadness; and at any rate he was deep in crime by this time, and consumed by his desire that McGann's motor should show some sign of becoming a profitable investment. His heart was hardened by guilt and by covetousness.

Walter sent no more letters, and Dorothea still waited for him. She bought every day the journal for which he wrote, and read eagerly the articles she thought were his. She read and re-read his old letters to her a hundred times and kissed them, and the daguerreotype of him which she kept hidden in her bureau drawer was kissed again and again, when she had looked at it until her eyes grew weary.

She felt that she could sing no more at church, but she must try, and when she sang she looked across to the place where he had first heard her on that Sunday long ago, and then her voice quivered, and she could hardly restrain her tears.

She thought of the chestnut-hunt, and the row on the river, and the loitering upon Graver's Point, and she recalled his words, the tones of his voice, the smile upon his face, and all the joyfulness that had made her life so happy.

The full summer came, and she walked by the river-bank, and said to herself, "Perhaps he may come to Turley to-day, and I shall meet him. Perhaps he will pass our house, and look for me, as he did once before I knew him."

But he did not come, and her heart was desolate. She heard sometimes of him. He spent his vacation at the seaside, sad and tired and longing for one who was far away. But he could not be alone at a great hotel. He

must join with the company about him in their pleasures. And so up to Turley came stories, carried by eager, observant people, that Walter was the gayest of the party, and that he went about much with a certain alluring Marietta Binns, whom he had known at his boarding-house.

And thus the wounded girl in Turley was stabbed again and again by gossip, until her anguish was almost beyond endurance.

Sometimes she thought she would write to him, despite her father. Sometimes she thought she would indeed defy her father and give herself to Walter. But, then, what if Walter had grown cold? What if she had driven him away by her too strong sense of duty to her father? She had heard that men were fickle; that absence diminishes affection; that a lovelier woman may disturb the devotion of one who has pledged himself to another.

But she would not believe that Walter loved her less. No, what could he do, considering her father's conduct towards him! He could not come to her or write to her. She felt that she would one day reach the condition which would permit her to regard her father's prohibition lightly. Yes, indeed, as she thought of the absent man, and loved him, and yearned for him, and wept for him, she often said to herself, in grim earnest:

"If I could have him for mine at any cost, I would pay it. I would live in a hovel. I would suffer for food. I would endure any fatigue, I would face any danger—yea, I would, without a moment's hesitation, cut off my hand, or tear out one of my eyes, if I could have his arms around me, and hear him tell me that he loves me."

But, alas! there seemed to be no way out. The darkness was just black darkness to her soul, and there was but one thing left for her: her religion.

She could pray and love and trust; pray for patience in the great sorrow that had come upon her; pray and pray and pray that the Divine Father who gave him to

THROUGH THE WAY OF THE WILDERNESS 283

her would one day give him back again ; and then say to herself over and over, in the words that came to her across the centuries :

"Commit thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him."

The day was indeed not far distant when her lover was to come to her again ; but sorrow was to stay with her.

CHAPTER XVIII

POLITICS IN TURLEY

WHEN the August sun grew hot and hotter, until men and women were almost stifled, and the land was parched, and there seemed a chance that the river might reach the boiling-point, Billy Grimes and the politicians began to prepare for the fall campaign, as indifferent to the ferocity of the temperature as they were to the fact that grief sat enthroned in Turley, and that hearts were bruised and torn and bleeding.

The Primary elections were held in August, when choice was made of candidates whose names should be placed upon the party-tickets for the election in October.

There was a theory in Turley that if a man really wanted to exercise potent influence in the local government, he should attend the primary election and help to direct the selection of candidates; and there was another and fonder theory, that the people did indeed possess what Billy Grimes and his friends often spoke of in terms of warm praise as the privilege of local self-government.

But nobody knew better than Billy that theory in this case was widely separated from practical fact. He was well aware that seventy-five per cent. of the voters paid no attention at all to the primary elections, and he knew if they had done so, Billy and his men would certainly count the votes wrong if the voters should happen to prefer the candidates whom Billy did not want.

So every year in August a few party men went lazily to the polls, and signified their assent to the ticket that Billy Grimes had put upon his "slate" far back in the preceding winter-time; and the candidates thus obtained what was regarded as a "regular" nomination. Mr. Grimes and the patriots who with him devoted their attention to saving the country, knew that the regular party-ticket would be elected in October, unless something of a surprising and almost unprecedented nature should occur to induce a few Democrats, belonging to the majority, to go over to the Whigs, who were the minority.

Both Whigs and Democrats believed that the people governed; but Billy Grimes could have told them (though he never did) that while twenty-five per cent. of the citizens rarely went to the polls at all, and while seventy per cent. of those who put the ballot in the box never failed to vote "the straight ticket," Mr. Grimes, the slate-maker, really governed Turley, and with power more nearly absolute than if he had worn a petty crown.

He governed Turley, not for the people's sake, or wholly for his own sake, but as the loyal henchman of Colonel Bly, who governed the state.

Most of the men in Turley belonged to the two great political parties, the Democratic and the Old Line Whig.

Within a few years a third party had come into existence—the Know Nothing party, which suspected the Pope of cherishing as the main purpose of his life the overthrow of the glorious institutions established by our Revolutionary fathers and cemented (as the orators of the party often said) by the blood and the tears of patriots. The Know Nothings believed that this nefarious and destructive design of the Pontiff had more or less hearty approval of foreigners generally, but particularly was it favoured by Europeans who sat on thrones and wielded sceptres. These persons were thought to scowl at the menacing spectacle of the young Republic across the Atlantic growing to a giant's strength, and giving out plain intimations that the time was fast coming when beneath its influence

thrones would totter, sceptres be wrested from the hands of despots, and the despots themselves be sent reeling into oblivion.

But the Know Nothings were few in number, and nobody, excepting the Pope and the occupants of the thrones, really cared much about them. Billy Grimes contemplated them with bold disdain, except when he wished to buy one or two votes in a close election.

There was a somewhat pathetic fragment of a Prohibition Party, which regarded the complete extermination of the traffic in alcoholic beverages as the only reform really required for bringing heaven to earth again; but in Turley there were no more than three Prohibitionists, two of them meek and shy men whom nobody regarded, and the third a Baptist deacon who was aggressive and vociferous, but who was looked upon by the community as a harmless enthusiast, whose preference for cold water had in it something of what may be called denominational influence.

The Old Line Whigs had always been a minority in Turley, chiefly perhaps because the more prosperous and best-educated citizens were Whigs, with the result that the persons of other classes received a strong impulse to join the Democrats. But in truth it would perhaps not have been easy for most of the members of either party to explain clearly why they found themselves enlisted in the ranks of their respective organizations.

Usually in the case of the perfectly respectable citizen, he was a Democrat or a Whig because his ancestors had been Democrats or Whigs. It was a familiar declaration that "My father and my grandfather were Democrats, and I never voted any other ticket in my life."

Thus men who were honest and sincerely patriotic frequently permitted the influence of their deceased relatives to induce them to shut their eyes to the unfit character of the persons named upon their party-ticket, and to vote the whole ticket at the elections with a dimly-perceived feeling that in doing so they were not only standing firmly by family tradition and practice,

but also performing a service of importance to their country.

Some cynical members of that small minority which owned no party affiliations, but did good work for the community by voting for one set of candidates or the other as they thought right, had more than once remarked upon the oddity of the fact that the Chinese worship of ancestors should have obtained such hold upon modern Americans as to impel them to sacrifice their money, their manhood, and even the interests of their government, to the memory of dead men who probably never cast a vote directed by intelligence and clear perception of the requirements of righteousness.

The solid and stolid Whigs were rarely contented to declare themselves mere Whigs. Emphasis was always given to the circumstance that they were "Old Line" Whigs; as if the Old Line Whig were a Whig of more intense, eager and resolute nature than a Whig who was not Old Line; although in fact no Whig had ever been discovered or had voluntarily revealed himself who was not of the Old Line variety. Nobody had attempted to explain the difference between the two kinds of Whigs, if two kinds existed, nor could any of the Turley Whigs have said precisely what the words "Old Line" meant in that connection, or why there should not be Old Line Democrats (of which no one had ever heard) as well as Old Line Whigs; but the prefix was retained and urged and dwelt upon, as if it expressed a fact and a qualification of the highest importance.

Thus also the Democrats were always Jeffersonian Democrats. Nobody had ever known in Turley or in the state a Democrat who was not of the Jeffersonian school; but the feeling existed that if a man ever should appear and proclaim himself a Democrat, and yet should not confess that he was a Jeffersonian Democrat, his claim to membership in the party would be regarded with suspicion, even though his vote might be received with welcome.

There were indeed many members of the organization who knew the source of the word "Jeffersonian" and who

had some sort of comprehension of the political theories of which Jefferson was the exponent and representative; but most of the Democrats of Turley had been born in Europe, and even those of them who could read English had not acquired very large acquaintance with American history. Few of these persons had inquiring minds, and they were Jeffersonian Democrats because that was the popular method of indicating the source of the party's creed. They would have found it quite as agreeable and reasonable to be Johnsonian Democrats or Thompsonian Democrats or Parkinsonian Democrats. Among the members of the party were some whose minds yielded now and then to impulses of curiosity, and with these there were dim impressions that the party got its name because it may have been started up in Jefferson County, or that the founder was a man who fought with the British in 1812, or that "Jeffersonian" is a word from one of the dead languages indicating the equality of man.

The foremost man in the party in the state was Colonel Bly. The colonel often declared in his speeches that he was a Jeffersonian Democrat from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. This always elicited storms of applause from audiences, who felt that the colonel, in thus expressing the fact that Jeffersonian Democracy had penetrated and lodged permanently in every fibre of his being, had revealed a truth which gave a heroic flavour to his character while it promised vast, if not clearly perceived, advantages to our common country.

Colonel Bly had begun at the very bottom in politics as a "worker" in one of the wards of the largest city in the state. He pushed his way upward with remarkable rapidity, but he never acquired a really firm grip upon the party organization, until he completed successfully what was alluded to at the time as his famous "deal" with the Shiawassee Indians.

The colonel was the principal owner of a bank in the town of Donovan. It was a very small bank, with a very large note-issue, and it was regarded by prudent

bankers as an institution with which dealings should be conducted with extreme circumspection.

Rather early in his career Colonel Bly, by some means, obtained an appointment from the federal government as disbursing agent for the Shiawassee Indians. To those unfortunate children of the forest, herded upon a reservation, the government owed two hundred and eighty thousand dollars for bounties and land purchases. This money was paid in gold to Colonel Bly, and the theory was that the colonel would convey it bodily to the Shiawassee beneficiaries. Colonel Bly had quite different plans for conducting the transaction. He procured from his bank two hundred and eighty thousand dollars of its notes, and, depositing the gold, he proceeded to the reservation, turned over the notes to the chief of the tribe, took his receipt in full, and then came home. The bank failed four days before the guileless red men could have managed, by any means, to present the notes for redemption.

He was regarded by the politicians generally as a masterpiece of dexterous business, and from that moment his genius for practical politics fully recognized, and the condition of his fortunes making him the object of envy, Colonel Bly assumed the leadership of his party in the state.

The colonel's declared position was that of the party's leader. In fact he was its master. He knew how to make concessions here and there, particularly in small local elections, where the people might have grown restive under interference from an outsider; but upon the whole his will was law, and if he wished a man to be nominated for any office, that man's name appeared upon the ticket. He had made, and he directed, a great organization which had effective operation in every part of the state. His man managed the machinery in each county, and answered to the colonel for that county.

The county man had his men in every voting precinct, and each precinct man held and directed a compact body of voters who never failed to do his will. The

process by which they worked was to select for places upon the ticket the men whom they desired to favour, to have the trained workers vote for these men at the primary elections from which most of the voters remained away, and then to depend upon the enthusiasm of the whole body of Democrats to carry the ticket through on election day—enthusiasm born simply of habit, of ancestral practice, and of the devotion of the Jeffersonian Democrats to the "Grand Old Party" and "the regular ticket." That the ticket was "regular" was usually enough for the old Jeffersonian Democrats, even though it represented both incompetency and rascality.

The colonel left the smaller local affairs to the county manager and to the precinct men. All he asked was that the nominees to the state offices and to the superior county positions should be first of all faithful to him. Always they were. The colonel was the source of political advancement. The man favoured by him always got a place of some kind under government. The political aspirant upon whom he frowned was lost. Thus he had the friendship and support of a great army of people, every one of whom hoped to edge himself into a public place with a comfortable salary before he died.

This was the secret of the colonel's power. He and his county subordinates had promised every office in the state twenty years ahead, and sometimes had made more promises than could be kept in half a century. But, when any man encountered a broken promise, he was promised something else and, at any rate, he dared not complain, for the colonel's disfavour would have shut the door of hope upon him. By such means the colonel kept his followers faithful; and although it was a ticklish game, he had played it successfully for twenty years, and there really appeared to be no reason why he should not play it for twenty years more if, unhappily, his life should be so long spared.

As the colonel never sought an office for himself, persons of not very alert minds were sometimes puzzled to understand why he should take so much trouble, and do so much hard work, and exercise so much skill in

keeping the game a-going. In an indolent sort of way they inclined to attribute his action to devotion to the principles of Thomas Jefferson. Other people perceived that the man had, in the first place, an inordinate and insatiable love of power, and this obtained some gratification from the manner in which he ruled a great community of free men who actually believed that they were engaged in governing themselves.

But the colonel's love of power was accompanied by another affection of quite even, or perhaps greater, intensity. He was engaged in no business, and he had no salary; but he had grown rich during the period in which he managed the Democratic machine. Some of the sources of his later wealth were not positively known, even to sharp-witted people, although hints had been circulated respecting transactions which would have put another man in the penitentiary. That a great railroad company would rather pay a large sum than have irritating and hurtful legislation adopted by the General Assembly was obvious, and no man in the state could control legislation like the party manager who had selected almost every Democrat in that body, and put him in office with his own hands. It was clearly perceived that the colonel could start such legislation and could halt it at any stage of its movement through the Houses; and much legislation of such a kind had been started and stopped since the colonel's hands held the sceptre.

The colonel always owned the state Treasurer, and the Treasury always had balances running up into millions. The laws designated no public depositories, and of course said nothing about interest upon deposits of public money. But this money always was placed in banks, and the use of it was worth much to these institutions. The bank of Turley, for example, could have sworn that it never paid a dollar of interest to anybody for such deposits; but the results would have been unpleasant for the directors if they had been asked if they ever contributed to the Democratic campaign-fund, or if such contributions would foot up anywhere near to

three per cent. upon such deposits. The colonel handled all the campaign funds, and never had an audit or an accounting. The colonel had always avoided the inconvenient practice of keeping books.

Thus the colonel had plenty of money for himself, and plenty of offices to give to his friends. Popularity could have no more solid basis. But, besides, the colonel was known to all the workers and to many of the rank and file as a mighty good fellow. He was always smiling. He never forgot a man's name, and many an humble voter, who had never ventured to aspire for himself even to the smallest office, had been thrilled through all his nerve-centres to have the colonel, who had not met him for years, come to him at a "grand rally," and clap him on the shoulder and say, "Hello Bill!"

The colonel was a plain man, a man of the people; neat but modest in his dress; able to speak like an educated man with the educated, but quite at ease with dislocated syntax and slang when he met alone those helpers and subordinates whom he was pleased to call "the boys."

It was said of the colonel by all the boys that "he always stood by his friends." This, and the fact that he was from centre to circumference a Jeffersonian Democrat, were his only apparent virtues. That he always stood by his friends was constantly reported by the voters who hoped some day to have the privilege of his friendship.

And it was true. The man who served him rarely failed to obtain substantial reward, while any of his adherents who got into office, and then got into trouble by misusing the public money, always had the protecting arm of the colonel thrown around them. Either the colonel made good the loss, or he had the jury fixed, or he provided the unfortunate man with a place in the consular service.

But the one friend whom the colonel always stood by most faithfully was the colonel himself.

Billy Grimes had control in the county in which Turley was situated; and he would have been permitted

to conduct this October local election without interference from the colonel, but for the fact that Davis Cook, the plumber, actually had the audacity to propose that he, Davis Cook, should be placed upon the Democratic ticket as a candidate for school director in Turley.

When the colonel heard of this, and remembered how Davis Cook had spoken at the Presbyterian church meeting of him and his contribution, and his methods of getting money, he considered it his duty to come to Turley at once, and to give orders that Davis Cook should be refused a nomination at the hands of a party whose master had been thus scandalously assailed.

To the colonel it seemed bad enough that one of his subjects should have the hardihood to reflect unfavourably upon his financial methods, but it was quite intolerable—it was menacing—that such a man should presume to name himself for a public office without consulting the colonel or his representatives; without obtaining permission from the ruler of the state, and as if he were a free man in a free community. It was plain enough that the whole political machine might go to pieces if the colonel's subjects should acquire the notion that they could run for office in obedience to mere erratic individual impulse; and the consequences might be serious if the practice should become common of referring to the colonel's wealth as plunder, and of classifying him among thieves. An example must be made of this presumptuous and preposterous plumber, so that discipline should be maintained.

"What put it into your head, Davis," asked Billy Grimes of the aspiring plumber, "that you would like to go on the School Board?"

"I put it into my own head," responded Davis. "You don't own the School Board."

"Maybe I do and maybe I don't; but you'll be much older before you get there."

"I'll get there if the people of this town want me to get there."

"Don't you worry about the people" answered Grimes.

"I'll take care of them. They don't intend to let a man like you direct public education, for one thing."

"I know too much, do I?"

"I don't know how much you know about some things, but you don't know enough to know that you can't get into office by insulting Colonel Bly."

"He owns you, and the School Board, and everything in sight, does he?"

"Never mind what he owns. He will down you, or any other man that has the insolence to talk about the way he made his money."

"How did he make it, Billy?"

"That's his business. You've got no right to meddle with it."

"If he stole some of it from me, I have," answered Davis Cook.

"You'd better be careful how you talk, or you'll be up to your armpits in a libel-suit the first thing you know. The colonel is a better man than any Presbyterian plumber that ever flourished a monkey-wrench."

"Well, Billy, I'll give you a fight, anyway," said Davis. "You may win, but you won't have no walk-over."

"Win!" exclaimed Grimes, with disgust, as he turned to consider some papers that he held in his hands. "Why, Davis, we will just wipe you off the face of the earth. You won't know where you are when the colonel gets through with you."

But, in truth, Mr. Grimes had not quite so much confidence as he pretended to have. He believed he could defeat Davis Cook, but Cook had many friends in both parties, and he had the great advantage that he was "a poor working-man." Nobody could charge that Davis Cook had affiliations with the aristocracy; nobody could accuse him of living in opulence, clipping coupons, and riding about in gorgeous equipages, while the sons of honest toil, the hope and mainstay of the country, earned their bread by arduous labour. Davis Cook's hands were calloused and grimed; his face had on it, usually, the smut and smirch of the genuine worker; he lived modestly; his people were all plain; and, besides, he

was known to everybody as a good fellow, willing to help anybody who was down, always paying good wages, and never failing to pay his debts.

And then, Davis belonged to nine secret and beneficial societies, including the Masons and the Odd Fellows, and the Red Men and the Knights of Pythias.

In some of these orders he held high places of dignity and influence with mysterious names, and on lodge nights he wore strange and wonderful garments, covered with awe-inspiring symbols. He was the master of some sixteen or eighteen grips and grand hailing signs, and he had at his command almost more passwords than any mind not trained in the business could remember.

It was thought, by well-informed men, that Davis Cook, flying about among hydrants, and gas-meters, and plumbers' joints and quarter-turn pipes, carried with him a greater accumulation of lodge secrets than any other man in the county.

Billy Grimes, therefore, knew very well that he had no ordinary antagonist to deal with; and he was not ashamed to engage his sovereign lord, the colonel, in a prolonged consultation respecting the best method to adopt to beat Davis. Of course, as a last resource, he could have the plumber counted out at the primary, but Grimes disliked to pursue that course if any other were available.

After careful review of the whole situation, and discussion of the availability of several men as candidates to run against Cook, Grimes made up his mind to put Rufus Potter's name upon the ticket. This decision had warm approval from the colonel.

Rufus seemed to possess many advantages. He was a horny-handed working-man, but he ranked much lower in the scale than Davis Cook, who, after all, was a master-plumber, and might reasonably be classed among the employers and oppressors of labour. This would attract the element in the party who always came to the polls and voted. Rufus was endeared to them, also, by the fact that his speech was even less refined than that of Davis Cook. He used more slang, and his disloca-

tions of syntax were, as we have seen, little less than appalling to educated people. Rufus, very visibly and emphatically, was a man of the common people. He stood near to the bottom. To this was added the not unimportant fact that Rufus had been a sailor, serving under his country's flag, and bearing about with him in Turley the agreeable reputation of a man who had seen the world, and had borne himself well in the midst of dreadful dangers.

Rufus was the right man for the place, beyond a doubt, and he was not averse to accepting it. He had never had an idea that he should hold office, but as soon as Grimes proposed to him to try to take one, his mind was inflamed by ambition, and it really seemed to him that public place was the one thing he had needed to round out his life perfectly.

But the willingness of Rufus was mere indifference in comparison with the willingness of his wife. She greeted with intense enthusiasm the announcement of the project, and as her imagination was permitted to play with the subject, it led her on, step by step, until at last she was able to picture Rufus, risen from one office to another, sitting in the White House as President, engaged in drawing a stupendous salary, while she and the eight children drove out in the afternoon, in a barouche lined with pink satin and drawn by four white horses, driven by a liveried coachman, who took orders from her as she sat, clothed in gorgeous raiment, and shaded her eyes with a real lace parasol.

It is needless to say that Hannah Potter at once opened the campaign with vigour, or that she began to look upon Davis Cook, whom she had always liked heretofore, as the enemy of organized society and the foe of liberty.

After an active and lively canvass of the Third Ward by Davis Cook in his own behalf, and by the regular party workers in the interests of Rufus Potter, the primary election was held on a Saturday night, late in August.

There were only two hundred and twenty Democrats,

all told, in the Third Ward of Turley, and of these one hundred and seventy contributed to the cause of popular self-government, and to the general uplift of the community, by remaining at home. One hundred and thirty-four of these forgot that the primary election was to be held upon that night. Some thought it was the preceding Saturday night, and some thought it was the next Saturday night.

Mr. Grimes had a firm, statesmanlike grasp upon the situation, and it became apparent to his discerning mind, early in the day, that if he depended upon his own people to rally to his standard, the cause was lost; and so he had arrangements made for voting thirty-three Democrats from other wards for Rufus, and three disreputable Whigs, and one rather loose Know Nothing from the Third Ward.

Davis Cook received sixty votes, and Rufus had eighty-seven, honest and dishonest. The tellers, Billy Grimes's own men, gave Rufus the certificate declaring that he had the regular nomination.

There was joy that night in the house of Potter. Rufus sat about, trying to have his mind grasp the full meaning of this wonderful experience that had come to him. The effort staggered him. Every now and then he felt his head swim, and he put his hand upon the table to steady himself.

But Mrs. Potter's mental vision swept easily over the whole field, and more.

"Didn't I tell you, Maud," she said, triumphantly, to her oldest girl, who was helping to wash the dishes, "that your father's elements of greatness would yet have distinguished recognition before he died, and that his fellow-countrymen would not much longer permit the bold mariner, who had found his pathway hither and thither upon the trackless waste of waters, amid a thousand perils, to remain in ignominious obscurity? I told *you* so, Rufus. Your wife knew you had it in you; and now it is out, and you will be clothed with authority, and will sit in official session, to direct how the blessings of education shall be showered down upon

infant minds ; and some day, when you have done good and faithful service in the School Board, the vista will open, and when dear Sammy comes back from his voyages, he will find you in Congress, sitting there in the halls of legislation, and directing the destinies of the greatest nation upon this earth. I saw it, Maud, from the very, very first ; and said to myself, when I married your father, that he was born for great things—really great things, such as no mere pipe-twisting, soldering plumber ever could be capable of."

Rufus heard her with delight, and as he heard, the feeling began to creep over him that perhaps Destiny was indeed leading him towards a higher sphere ; but he was haunted, also, by some sort of fear that he should not be quite certain what to do when he got there.

Davis Cook, defeated by the Democrats, was promptly nominated by the Whigs, who jumped at such a chance to win a victory ; and Davis began at once his canvass of the ward and of the adjacent township which voted with the ward.

One of his first visits was paid to Dr. Quelch, the most influential man in the neighbourhood. He found the doctor in his office, and was invited to enter and take a seat.

"I come to see you, doctor," said Davis, "to ask for your vote and support for me for school director."

"I see," said the doctor. "You won't mind, Davis, if I ask you what qualifications you have for the office of director of the public schools?"

"None whatever," replied Davis, with emphasis.

"Give me your hand, Davis," said the doctor, rising. "You shall have my vote. I like your frankness. But, Davis, why then are you running for the place? Why do you desire it?"

"Simply because Colonel Bly wants to keep me out. He says I shan't have the place, and I am determined to beat him if I can."

"Good!" said the doctor. "The motive is not exactly lofty, but I admire pluck, and I have no admiration for Bly. I will vote for you, but you will not be elected."

"Why not?"

"Because the Democrats are running against you a man less capable than you are."

"Potter?"

"Yes. If they had put up a highly-educated man, full of power, and pre-eminently qualified to perform the duties, you could have beaten him. But you can't beat Rufus."

"You think not?"

"Potter is probably less fit to direct public education than any man in the township. The fact seems to me to make his election almost certain."

"I know. That's the way it goes. But I am going to try, anyway."

"Very well. Do your best, and I will stand by you, but don't expect victory."

Davis Cook rose, and picked up his hat, intending to take his leave.

"Are you in a hurry, Davis?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"No."

"Sit down, then. Smoke a pipe. I should like to talk with you a little while."

Dr. Quelch gave to Cook a pipe and tobacco, and filling a pipe for himself, the two began to smoke.

"Davis," said the doctor, "I want some information. You are a mechanic and an honest man; and you know you can trust me, if you are willing to reveal some of the secrets of the brotherhood."

"Yes," said Davis. "I'll tell you anything I know. Tell you in a minute."

"Well, Davis, let me state the case. When I built this house there were thirteen flues upon the plan—heat-flues and smoke-flues. When the house was completed, I found that every one of those flues was blocked with bricks and mortar. The men who constructed them, while constructing them, deliberately dropped brickbats and mortar and other stuff into them and made them useless. I have heard scores of other people say that the same thing was done with their houses. It is, in short, the universal practice. I infer that there is a

motive. Now, Davis, I want to know what it is. Why does a man who takes the trouble to build a hole, simultaneously choke it up?"

"I dunno," said Davis, thoughtfully, puffing out the smoke, "but——"

"One moment," said the doctor. "Before you answer, let me say that this same rule appears to operate in all the trades. If you have your shoes re-soled the shoemaker always leaves pegs inside, doesn't he?"

"Always," said Davis.

"Although he knows that you cannot wear shoes in that condition. When a painter comes here to work, he never fails to fill the keyholes in the doors with paint, and to put upon the window-sashes paint which will not dry for a year, and which makes the sashes immovable. Isn't that so?"

"Exactly!" said Davis. "I never knowed it to fail."

"I had steam-heat put into my house, and of course there is a water-gauge in the boiler in the cellar. For months I could never perceive any water in the gauge, and at last I had the thing torn out, and I found that the workman, in finishing up the job, had driven a wooden plug into the pipe which should feed the gauge. Odd, wasn't it?"

"Not at all," said Davis. "That was as good a way as any of making trouble."

"While the carpenter was putting the shingles on my east gable," continued the doctor, "I pointed out one particular place where the rain would be likely to come in from a driving south-easterly storm. I asked him to take extra pains to protect that spot, and he said he would. We took out two buckets of water from beneath that very place when the first storm came after the house was built. What would you say to that, Davis?"

"I should say I am surprised you didn't take out four buckets and have three other leaks. But I'll tell you——"

"Just a moment!" said the doctor, "let me finish."

"You fixed up my bath-room for me."

"Yes."

"Well, I told you that I intended to put expensive paper on the ceiling of the room beneath, and asked you to make the pipes tight. Do you remember?"

"Perfectly."

"And you remember, do you, that the pipes did not leak a drop for more than two weeks; but the moment the paper was on the ceiling underneath, and the paper-hangers had gone home, that very moment the pipes began to leak. Now, Davis, let me ask you, did you time it?"

"I wouldn't like to say that," said Davis, knocking the ashes from his pipe and refilling it. "Not just that, but the pipe was bound to leak sooner or later, and it was just a part of the general crookedness of things that it waited till the paper was ready."

"What is your theory about it, Davis?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"Well," said Davis Cook, relighting his pipe and leaning back in his chair. "I'll tell you how it is, only I dunno as you will care to listen, for you have to go away back to get the start of the thing."

"Back to what?"

"Well, you see, things was built crooked in this world on purpose. There ain't nothing that was arranged to go exactly right. You know better than I do, doctor, that if we went sailing along through life smooth and pleasant, like drifting with the tide, we'd never amount to nothing—now would we?"

"No."

"Very well, then; there's big troubles, and there's little troubles. You may lose your money, or your health, or your relations, or you may not; but, anyhow, it'll rain on the day you fix for a picnic, or your train'll be late the day you particularly want to make a connection with another train, or you'll stub your toe so you can't walk just as you arrange for a pedestrian tour, or the rain'll come on hard when you've left home without your umbrella (did you ever notice that?) or a dreadful bore'll drop in to see you just when you

thought you'd like to be alone. It's always that way, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"You start out in life, believing that you're going to have nearly perfect bliss, and lo, and behold! there's something every day in the year, and nearly every hour in the day, to worry and annoy you. Now, why is it, doctor? Why is it?"

"What is *your* theory, Davis?"

"It's like this. Here we have, as the books say, evidence of design. The road of life was made rough on purpose. And why? Doctor, you know well enough. It was made so for our good."

"I have heard something like that before, I think," said the doctor.

"Of course! If things was always right, life would be too easy. We need discipline—discipline of adversity. It makes us strong to fight trouble. Our patience is tried, and so we know we have patience, and we get more patience, and so forth. You know all about it."

"And you think the man who chokes a flue is appointed to help the thing along?"

"Certainly. Probably he never quite means to choke the flue. Some overpowering outside agency directs him, makes him careless, throws him off his guard. He plays his part in the great drama of life. The man who chokes the flue, or fixes a pipe to leak, is working to make men better. You might call him the Angel of Discipline."

"You think, then, that the whole matter is supernatural?"

"Well, I don't know as I quite call it that. It's just the way things is fixed. You try to toss a book on the table, and it falls on the floor. If you tried to throw it on the floor, it would have fell on the table. You go through your house in the dark, and hold your arms straight in front of you, and an open door goes between your arms, and you hit your nose. You could hardly steer straight enough in broad daylight to get the door into the space between your arms, but you do it

sure in the dark. Out in the ocean you sail along for days, and never see a sight of a ship. Let a fog come up, and it's five chances to one you'll have a collision in two hours! No, I don't exactly say supernatural; them's just the lines on which the world is built. There ain't no intention that things 'll go straight."

"Then it's your thought that a hidden power compelled you to fix the pipe in my bath-room, so that it would leak?"

"Well, I don't want to shirk no responsibility, or to blame nobody else. But the fact is, I did my very best. I thought it was all tight and snug. But there had to be a hitch somewhere for your uplifting towards higher things, and so I s'pose my attention was called off, by some mysterious influence, from a weak place in the joint, and you had the benefit. You learned something more about self-control, and the hollowness of life, when the water came through on the ceiling-paper. No doubt you are this very minute nearer heaven because I inadvertently missed that tender place in the joint. It ought to have been added to my bill."

"Davis," said the doctor, rising and extending his hand, "you made a mistake when you said you are not qualified for school director. A mind like yours would be of incalculable value in that service. I thank you for your explanation. It is entirely satisfactory. Your bill would not have been satisfactory if it had been larger. The catastrophe to which you refer may have supplied an impulse to the higher life. May be so; but I shouldn't have been willing to have a cash valuation put upon the experience. Depend upon my vote and my influence in your campaign. Davis, I wish we had more men like you."

Then Davis shook hands with the doctor, went out, mounted his light wagon bearing the inscription, "Davis Cook: Plumbing and Gas-fitting: Wind-Mills and Pumps: Turley," and drove off to ask Major Gridley for his vote, while Dr. Quelch shut his office-door and had a quiet laugh to himself.

CHAPTER XIX

EFFORTS TO SAVE THE COUNTRY

To Dorothea Hamilton, sitting quietly in her home, trying to learn how to wait patiently for peace which she felt might never more return to her, often there came remembrance of the words that Walter had spoken long ago about a man whose grief made even the sunshine look like blackness to him. How far away she seemed then from the possibility that experience should teach her what that condition was! But now she could understand it. The life that had been always happy had now become joyless; and the gloom that filled the sorrowing spirit darkened every object that she contemp'ted. She was learning the lesson, so hard for the young to learn, that there is no power in material things to supply happiness; that true happiness is spiritual, and is present only when the spiritual nature has some measure of satisfaction.

What the spirit needs first and always is love, and gradually it became clear to Dorothea that the human love which had brought to her so large a portion of bliss is but a type of, or perhaps an emanation from, that Divine Love which fills all the universe, and full response to which is perfect peace.

She considered these and kindred mysteries and dwelt much upon them in her loneliness, trying to find the way to that faith which permits absolute trust in the unseen, and in the promise that though grief abide an evening guest, yet joy shall come with morning light.

But there was hunger in her heart for human sympathy, and she would have had comfort in the companionship and the counsel of Florabella Burns, had not that comforting and cheering person closed her house soon after Walter and Dorothea had met there, and fled away to the mountains and the shore for her summer outing. Alas, now that the summer was gone, Florabella, with no family cares to demand her presence at home, lingered among her friends in the east, and seemed not unlikely to remain away from Turley till the leaves were fallen and the frost was upon the ground.

Her absence made more forlorn and desolate the condition of Dorothea, and it was unfortunate, because by chance it helped to strengthen Walter's foolish notion that Dorothea cared more to heed her father's cruel demand than she did to express her love for the man who truly loved her.

Breaking his resolution to write no more when she did not answer the letter he sent to her by Saul Tarsel's hand, he wrote again, after some delay, in care of Mrs. Burns, sure that she would put the letter in Dorothea's hands, and sure, also, that if this appeal should bring no response, his sweetheart must indeed have become faithless.

But, alas, the letter came to Turley when Mrs. Burns had gone. It was sent after her, and when for weeks it had followed her about, as she wandered from place to place, it reposed at last in the letter-box of a seaside hotel until autumn came. Then it went to the Dead Letter Office and returned to Walter when letter-writing to Dorothea was no longer necessary.

Not knowing that the letter had gone astray, he felt angry with the poor girl who loved him so much, and despite the fierce pain in his own breast, he thought that she could not suffer; for if she did, she had but to write to him, and he would speak to her in words which would bind them more closely together.

This was *his* way; that was the way he would have adopted to keep the two souls in communion; and if

it had been adopted, then, in his hot impatience, no doubt he would have insisted that Dorothea should set aside the authority of her father, forsake her home and come with him.

But this was not the way that Fate had prepared for him and her. There was to be another and very strange way, not without painfulness, by which she was to be given to him; and it was part of his discipline—very necessary discipline, too—that he should learn to wait.

It was easier for him than for her. The man had his daily portion of toil to divert his mind from his troubles; he met many people; he moved amid change-ful scenes; he had little time or chance for introspection and brooding; and in Walter's case there was even cheerful company for him, because Marietta Binns still flitted about his boarding-house, and Marietta, besides having a disposition which was always sunshiny and often inclined to almost indecorous hilarity, had a positive ravenous hunger for theatrical and operatic performances of precisely the kind that Walter was driven to by the requirements of his profession.

The Turley folk who came to town, and sometimes saw him at such places in joyous company, did not fail to chatter about it when they went home; and some tidings of the matter could not but drift into the chamber where the woman who loved him sat sorrowing.

She had time to think, time to remember, time to conjecture what the future might bring, time to weep and to dream, and to indulge herself in passionate, deep longings. There were no diversions for her. She had a little round of duties to perform, in her home, and at the church; but the company that came to the house entertained her not at all; and while she pitied poor young Frobisher, who fluttered about her and made up his mind to breathe his passion to her, only to unmake it a score of times, she was weary of him.

And then, it was plain enough to her, and to her dear mother, that a change of some kind had come upon her

father. They did not speak to each other much about it, and to him they said nothing ; but clearly he was not quite what he used to be in his affectionateness, and in his ready interest in domestic matters.

In truth, Hamilton had found his first theft of money from the bank so easy, and yet the burden of his guilt so hard, that he determined to take some more, and with it to make a few bold ventures in the city stock market. Thus he might recover what he had given to McGann, make enough perhaps to pay the second instalment, and possibly have something for his own pocket.

Unfortunately for him, his first speculative movement netted him nearly fifteen hundred dollars. Excited by this good fortune, he looked for a chance to go in more heavily. He found it, and lost all he had made and all he had stolen. Then he took more money, invested and lost again. It is not worth while to repeat that old familiar story. When he gave up the game he had thrown away six thousand dollars of the bank's money in speculation, and had upon him an obligation to steal five thousand more, and to cover the whole of the embezzlement by falsifying the books.

He was not strong enough completely to conceal his despondency from his family, or to keep his mind from wandering, in their presence, to the bank, the stock exchange, and the workshop where the motor stood. His disappointments and the feverishness of his mind were manifested also in irritation which had rarely appeared in his manner when he was an innocent man ; and this irritability had been increased by the demands made upon him by McGann for the second payment, and by the failure of the motor to fulfil some of the expectations entertained by the inventor.

McGann had spent the summer trying to find a method of carrying the force over longer distances from the generator to the motor. He had zigzagged half a mile of wire upon the ceiling of his shop, and sent the current through it, as he thought, but without any effect upon the motor. Experiments showed that he could

not transmit the power economically for more than one hundred yards, and if he could not, the motor would be of little use. The steam-engine alone would do the work, and do it better.

But the judge was sanguine, and he felt sure that when he had a few more thousand dollars in hand victory would be reached and rich returns would begin to flow in. The dollars were to come from Hamilton and from the bank; and Hamilton had not got even the patents to show for his first investment; for the office at Washington was indisposed to hurry with a matter so novel and so important.

While John Hamilton engaged in perilous financiering, and his daughter looked out on the sad world through her tears, and Florabella lingered in far distant regions, and the motor refused to do its duty, the political campaign gained in fervour as opposing factions strove for mastery.

Late in September a Grand Democratic Rally was to be held at Turley, with the Turley Brass Band at the head of a procession illuminated by torches and transparencies; and there was to be an out-door meeting, whereat several of the most eminent politicians in the state were to explain to the followers of Jefferson, exactly how the country could be saved. It was thought probable that Colonel Bly himself would deign to be present and to say a few words of cheer to his faithful subjects; but it was announced as an assured fact that "Our Distinguished Fellow Townsman, Mr. Rufus Potter, will also have the honour of addressing the Meeting."

When Rufus saw this announcement in letters of blazing red upon the posters at the street-corners, he had mingled feelings of exaltation and trepidation. It was much to be designated in letters of that area and that hue as a distinguished citizen, and to find himself ranked among the orators who were to make the welkin ring with patriotic speeches; but when Rufus thought of himself as in the act of speaking to an audience of Turleyites, his heart sank within him, and there was in

his knees a tendency to smite together which he had rarely noticed before.

He would have declined peremptorily the request of Billy Grimes and the committee for a few eloquent remarks, had not Mrs. Potter strenuously insisted that it would be little short of madness for him to lose so good an opportunity to permit his genius to shine upon a community hitherto far too little appreciative of its quality; and that the radiance might have assured brilliancy, she undertook for herself the very congenial task of preparing her husband's speech for him.

The work of composition would have been easier for her if she could have been permitted to frame it upon her lips, for fluency was one of her gifts; but while she laboured strenuously to trace the oration upon paper, she was consoled continually with the bright vision offered to her mind by Hope, which represented her far in the future in the act of preparing for Rufus Potter, the President-elect of the United States, an inaugural address which she and the children should listen to with rapture, and then drive to the White House with the satin-lined barouche and the four white horses.

Regarded as really her first effort at preparation of a political stump-speech, Mrs. Potter's little piece was not so very bad; and, in fact, when she had read it to a few of her women-friends, infusing into her manner an intensity of enthusiasm of which Rufus probably was not capable, they made no pretence of concealing their admiration for the speech and for the writer. Mrs. Julia McGlory even went so far as to say that Henry Clay himself could not have done better.

The speech was as follows:

"Fellow-citizens, your candidate is more used to being rocked in the cradle of the mighty deep, where the fierce tempest rages, than in standing upon the platform; but when my country summons me to help her in the hour of deadly peril, I should deserve a traitor's doom if I did not heed her call! I stand before you as the friend of education and the poor working-

man! I point with pride to my humble birth in a rude cabin in the primeval forest, amidst the glorious mountains of Tennessee, and to these horny hands grimed with painful toil and the sweat of my brow from the earliest years of innocent childhood. Who so fit to guide the education of the young as the father of eight children (three boys and five girls) who in many a battle with the tempest and the storm on the bosom of the ocean has seen foreign lands with his own eyes, and knows geography to be true, and by gazing at the stars can steer a mighty ship safely o'er the billows?

"Will you vote against him for a man who sends his only child to a pay-school and becomes the vassal of the rich and the oppressor, or will you rally to the working-man's candidate who pledges himself to have the schools teach navigation, and Roman numerals, and American grammar, and who never seen the starry banner of the free waving upon a foreign shore without feeling his heart beat for his native land, and his bosom heave with emotion as he thinks of General Washington and his immortal words, 'Give me liberty or give me death,' and vote on Tuesday for Rufus Potter for school director, the man who always done his duty!"

It now developed upon Rufus to commit the speech to memory, and to have it so firmly lodged in his mind that he should remember every word of it, amid the excitement and fear of his first appearance upon the platform.

Rufus employed diligence in trying to perform the task. Upon his wife's recommendation he learned two lines at a time, and when he had thoroughly mastered them she would have him repeat them to her. His greatest difficulty was that, when he had the first two lines actually imbedded in his intellectual apparatus, so that it seemed as if he would remember them far into eternity, he found that as he passed on to and learned the next two lines, the first two had vanished as completely as if they had been written in sand and washed out by the rising tide.

He went through the entire oration two lines at a



" He could be heard in the cellar making reference in subdued tones to General Washington."

Captain Blunt

[Page 31]

time, and when the concluding lines had been acquired, they alone, a mere pitiful fragment of the resounding whole, were held in memory's grasp.

The aspiring statesman tried hard. Captain Bluitt found him sitting about the stable, in the dearborn, or the hay-mow, or behind the smoke-house, muttering the words of the speech; he could be heard in the cellar, as he poked the furnace or removed the ashes, making reference in subdued tones to General Washington and the glorious mountains of Tennessee, or to his preference for death if liberty should be suddenly snatched away.

He gave up his solar observations from the centre of the asparagus bed; he went about the streets on errands with an air of abstraction, like a man who has something lying heavy on his mind; he sat up late at night, and missed meals, and forgot to black Captain Bluitt's boots, and began to have a great yearning look in his eyes, as if his soul were reaching out towards ineffable things; and still, after a week of struggle and wrestle and suffering, Hannah found that there were only six lines that he could really count on, and they were so much confused as to be likely to convey to the hearer the impression that General Washington was born in the glorious mountains of Tennessee.

Only one week remained before the meeting, and Mrs. Potter perceived that something must really be done, unless the very first step of the young statesman towards the White House should have disastrous consequences.

She rose to the requirements of the occasion. She learned the speech herself; and sacrificing her household duties as much as possible, she followed Rufus about, in the stable, in the garden, and while he was in the house, repeating the words and having him say them after her, until she herself grew weary of them. She could have said them backwards.

Neighbours who came home late at night, and passed the Potter house, went to rest convinced that there was a breach of the amicable relations that had always existed between this loving pair, because they seemed

to be engaged in prolonged and sometimes violent altercation. But the voices were those of Rufus and of the wife who had soaring ambition for the husband, and who, far into the hours of darkness, and in the repose of the chamber, compelled Rufus to follow her in repeating that speech which should start him on the road to glory.

When the great day came, victory crowned the efforts of the assiduous wife, and she felt sure that Rufus had firm hold of his speech at last. He could eat no supper that evening, and while she and the children partook of the meal, Rufus stood back by the stove and repeated the oration over and over, never missing more than two or three words.

But he was not happy. Indeed, as he contemplated the prospect it seemed to him hardly less than appalling. He began to feel that even the joy of sitting upon the School Board, and helping in farcical feet to climb that hard old hill of Learning, was purchased dearly at the cost of such suffering as that which he should endure before bed-time. Even when his wife tried to fix his mental gaze upon the White House, and to show him that that home of power and splendour lay directly before him, it seemed somehow to him that the cabin in the rear of Captain Bluitt's garden really had some distinct advantages of its own.

Rufus went to the meeting as a prisoner goes to the scaffold. His wife went with him, and four of the older children, and she cheered his tremulous soul with the assurance that she would stand directly beneath the speaker's place upon the platform and hold the paper in her hand ready to prompt him, if memory should forsake him.

The Grand Rally of the Jeffersonian Democracy of Turley was held on an open lot just east of the market-house. A platform of rough boards had been built in the centre of the lot, and it was surrounded by a railing, and filled with seats for the members of the local committee, and for other distinguished citizens who should lend the influence of their presence to this great up-

rising in behalf of the salvation of the country and the promulgation of sound political principles.

Around the sides of the platform were many flaring torches, which blazed and flickered and smoked, and when Rufus came near he found a crowd, which opened a way for him and looked at him with curiosity and high expectation. Mounting the platform, he found the committee standing and talking to several strangers, and when he had been welcomed, he was introduced as "Mr. Potter, one of our candidates," to General Marcus Hook of Clarion, to Captain E. L. P. Magruder of Cayuga, and to the Honourable Arcturus M. Walters, Member of Congress from the Sixteenth District.

These were the gifted orators who were to thrill the Jeffersonian Democracy of Turley with eloquence, and be in turn held spell-bound by the oratory of Rufus. It was the first time our candidate had found himself in such lofty company, and while he enjoyed the honour, he had most painful misgivings as to the consequences of the impending proceedings.

In a few moments the brazen harmonies of the Turley Brass Band were heard in the distance, and soon afterwards the boom of the drum and the clangour of the horns suddenly rose in *fortissimo*, as the head of the procession swung around the corner, and began to approach the platform.

The occupants of the structure took their seats, and while the band filed off to the side and continued to play in the most clamorous and resolute manner, the procession broke ranks with resounding cheers for Colonel Bly and the whole ticket, and the members mingled with the crowd that stretched far in front of the platform, and far outward to the right and to the left.

When the concluding cadences of the music were heard, and the conscientious bass-drummer had thumped a final thump, Billy Grimes arose, and proposed to organize the meeting by nominating a chairman and enough vice-presidents and secretaries to have made a political party of considerable dimensions, if they had

consented to go off by themselves and to arrange for a movement of that kind.

These officers having been elected by a unanimous vote, and three more really uproarious cheers having been given for the whole ticket, the chairman read the resolutions, which pointed plainly to the fact that the manifest purpose of the existence of the Whig party was to rend asunder and trample under-foot the sacred heritage of the fathers, to reduce the poor working-man to a condition of perpetual poverty and serfdom, and to try to elevate to a position of equality with the Caucasian race the Americans of African descent who had been condemned to a condition of servitude by the curse pronounced upon their ancestor.

This having been made clear to every Democrat present, the resolutions went on to explain that there was but one hope for the country and for the preservation of the institutions for which our patriotic sires had suffered and bled, and but one hope for the working-man so long ground beneath the merciless heel of the rich oppressor, and that was in the triumph of the Democratic party. The crisis was here! The time for action had come! The overthrow of Democratic principles at this important juncture simply meant that the Grand Old Republic, glorious in her history and freighted with hallowed memories and with high promise for the human race, would go reeling downward to everlasting ruin.

There was no dissenting voice when the meeting was asked to declare if these things were so. All Turley heard the shout of affirmation, and the three more cheers for the whole ticket.

The Honourable Arcturus M. Walters, of the Sixteenth District, was then introduced by the chairman, and leaning far over the railing, with one hand beneath the tails of his coat, and his other hand swinging in a vigorous manner through space, he demonstrated, amid enthusiastic cheering, that this was the hour when the patriots of the Democratic party must rise in their might and strike the shackles from the arms of the down-trodden

labourer, if there was any expectation that this feat would ever be performed.

The Honourable Arcturus M. Walters concluded his oration with dramatic recitation of a passage from "The Curse of Kehama," and of a quotation of an impressive nature from "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan." Mr. Walters had employed these two poetic fragments, according to the estimates of his friends, at more than two hundred and thirty-seven political meetings, and always with powerful effect upon his hearers.

As the honourable member from the Sixteenth District concluded his oration and resumed his seat, wiping the perspiration from his brow, General Marcus Hook of Clarion came forward and began his speech, as he always did, with two or three amusing anecdotes, which were received with roars of laughter.

It was the turn of Rufus next. While the general talked and the audience laughed, Rufus sat upon the front bench filled with horror that almost paralyzed him. He hardly dared look at the crowd in front of him; but when he did venture to turn his eyes in that direction, he saw Mrs. Potter close by, smiling and joyful, and waving at him as a cheering sign that he might feel confident, the paper on which his speech was written. He began to search his memory, and his blood froze in his veins as he discovered that he could not recall a word of it. Then, suddenly, he saw far out in the crowd the face of Captain Bluitt, who was a Whig, but who was curious to hear Rufus speak. Rufus knew that he should not be able to stand up, much less to repeat the speech that had been written for him.

In an incredibly short time, General Marcus Hook completed his oration, and as the applause died away, the band began to play "The Star Spangled Banner." The hour had come for Rufus! He felt that he would rather die than to undertake the task that lay before him. He had an impulse to vault over the railing at his side and to fly. The crowd was too dense for that. He was almost distracted. But there was a loose board beneath his feet. It moved and left an opening when he kicked

it. He pushed the board further over, and as the band blew and pounded its way into the last bar but four of the glorious old anthem, Rufus let his feet dangle for a moment in the gap beneath him ; then he slid from his seat, through the crevice to the ground, crawled out upon all-fours to the back of the platform, and ran home and hid himself in the hay-mow.

When the chairman rose, he began to say, "We will now have the pleasure of hearing from our esteemed fellow-townsmen, Mister——"

But Billy Grimes came forward, touched his elbow, and whispered to him, and the chairman began again:

"Our esteemed fellow-townsmen, Mr. Rufus Potter, I regret to say, has been taken suddenly ill, and I now have the pleasure of introducing to you, Captain E. L. P. Magruder of Cayuga."

Mrs. Potter walked sadly home with the four children, and not finding Rufus in the house, her instinct directed her to the stable. She stood at the door and called her husband.

A response in a faint voice came from the hay-mow, and Rufus descended the ladder.

Mrs. Potter was able to persuade herself that he was really ill, and as they walked over to the house she put her arm about him and said:

"Never mind, Rufus ; you will have another chance yet ; and you'll be elected anyhow."

But, as Mrs. Potter lay awake that night and reflected upon the exciting adventures of the evening, it seemed to her that the movement of the family toward the White House was likely to be not so rapid as she had anticipated.

The next week the Whigs held their meeting ; and the posters announced that among the speakers would be "our popular fellow-townsmen, Mr. Davis Cook, and Mr. Walter Drury, the distinguished journalist."

Walter had been asked to speak in Turley, and he had consented for several reasons. He should like to have his uncle and aunt hear him ; he should be glad to convey to John Hamilton's mind a larger notion of the

editor's importance, and chance might favour him in permitting him have once more a vision of Dorothea.

The meeting was held in the so-called Academy of Music, which had its auditorium upon the floor that was level with the street. It was brilliantly lighted for the occasion; and when the Turley band, after parading about the town, marched into the building emitting music of the most exhilarating character, the crowd surged in after it and soon filled all the chairs.

A chairman was elected, and scores of vice-presidents and secretaries were elected; and then the meeting adopted resolutions representing that the Democratic party had no other purpose for existence than the overthrow of American institutions.

Then the chairman read a short address which was crammed full of animating observations, and when he folded up his paper amid tumultuous cheering, he introduced Davis Cook to the audience.

"You all know very well, fellow-citizens," said Davis, "that I don't pretend to be no orator, but I've never seen the time yet when I was afraid to look Turley people in the face, and tell them what I think about things, though maybe what I happen to think mayn't be of so very much account anyhow.

"I am a candidate, as you all know, for school director, and I want to be elected. I'm not a-going to claim that I have any particular gift for directing schools, but I am a-going to claim that I'm about as good at that business as the men that are a-doing it now. If the lightning would strike every man in the School Board who ain't fit to manage public education, the board could cast a unanimous vote in the Hereafter before the storm blew over. I needn't tell you, who know every mother's son of 'em, that there isn't enough real education in the School Board, taking them as they run, to fit out the smallest infant class in the coloured people's Ebenezer Sunday School; and while I don't know much, I always knowed enough to know how much I don't know, and to pick out people to do what I can't do.

"I have nothing agin Rufus Potter, the Democratic

candidate for the office. So far as I can understand, he's a kind father and a good husband, and a fairish sort of a man at rubbing down a horse and shovelling dirt ; but if Rufus Potter is qualified to direct public education, then Davis Cook is qualified to work a plumber's joint on the Milky Way, and to fix the attraction of gravitation so's it will pull upwards.

"I have always been a Democrat, and you are Whigs ; but the way I look at it, national politics has nothing more to do with the business of our School Board than hard-soldering has to do with horse-racing ; and if you elect me, I'll be neither a Whig nor a Democrat in that body, but I'll see to it that the school-tax ain't increased without good reason, and that the children will have the right kind of learning stowed in their little brain-pans.

"The reason why I'm not running on the Democratic ticket is, that the man who owns that party and bosses the whole state wouldn't let his serfs here in Turley put me on. He got mad at me, because I opposed letting some of his money come into my church, on the ground that it was probably stolen, and that a church ought to have clean money or stay poor. That's what I say now, and I don't care who hears me. I never seen Colonel Bly steal no money, but it seems pretty near certain that he began life by skinning the Shiawassee Injins, and if he ever earned a dollar since by honest work, he done it on the sly, after dark, for nobody ever seen him do it.

"I'm no better than my neighbours. I'm just a plain plumber who works hard at a rough business ; but there's written receipts somewhere for all the money I ever got since I earned journeyman's wages ; and if any man knows of a dollar that I have that I didn't get honest, all he has to do is to produce the proof, and I'll pay a hundred dollars back for every dirty dollar he can find in my hands.

"I'm a master-plumber, and I'm proud of it. I don't say that Colonel Bly is a master-thief, for I can't prove it ; but if the evidence could be had, and I'd never seen it, I'd bet my horse and wagon against eight cents, that when the documents were produced, they would put the

colonel in the penitentiary, unless the statute of limitations would serve to keep him out.

"That man rules this state, without your leave or mine ; but as far as I've got any say in the matter, he can't rule me. I am the sole owner of Davis Cook. There was big talk over at the Democratic meeting the other night about the glorious institutions established by our revolutionary forefathers. What they gave us was liberty and the right to govern ourselves. What we've got is boss government, that robs you while it rules you. It would make Thomas Jefferson giddy if he could come back here and study Colonel Bly and Billy Grimes. Our right is to manage our own government, and if we don't want to take the trouble to do that, I'm in favour of hunting about and having a decent despot, who will take care of us right and not pick our pockets while he shouts for the Declaration of Independence.

"That's about all I have got to say. Give me a fair chance. I know you can find blow-holes in my grammar, and that my spelling is often weak at the joints. You'd knock me clean out if you was to push me hard at history, and what I don't know about higher mathematics would reach from here to Texas and half-way back again ; but you put me in that School Board, and I'll serve you honest, in spite of all the bosses in the state ; see if I don't."

The applause that followed Davis Cook as he turned to resume his seat showed that he had made a strong impression upon the audience. He rose and bowed again and again, as round after round of cheers were given for him.

Then Walter Drury rose to speak, and Captain Bluitt and Aunt Puella, sitting near to the front of the room, looked at him with feelings of rapturous admiration.

But he had an unseen listener, for whom he would have cared more, had he known that she heard him.

When Dorothea knew that he would come to Turley to speak at the Whig meeting, her desire to see him and to hear him was almost overpowering. She hardly knew what to do ; but late in the afternoon she put on her

bonnet, and walked down by the river-bank, as she often did, in the hope that he would reach town before dark, and would perhaps seek her there.

She lingered long upon the bank, until the twilight faded into night, and he did not come. Florabella's house was closed, but she looked eagerly at the Bluitt house. Perhaps he might be there and would see her, and would come forth to greet her. No, there was no indication of his presence. In truth he was on the railway train, speeding toward Turley, while she walked to and fro by the river with eager longings in her heart.

And so she went home to weep once more in the room where so often before she had shed bitter tears. What should she do to have one glimpse of the man she loved? She could not go alone to the meeting; she could not ask father or mother to go with her; she could not ask to be permitted to accompany Captain Bluitt and Miss Puella.

But when the hour for the meeting came, she went softly down the stairs and out upon the porch at the side of the house. Putting a shawl upon her head and shoulders, she walked out through the garden-gate to the street, and down to the corner of the next street where the Academy of Music was. On the further side of the building was an open lot, and a fence ran the whole length of the structure two or three feet from the wall.

Creeping in between the fence and the wall, in the darkness, she was safe from curious eyes, safe from molestation. The windows were just above her head. She could not look into the room, but it was a warm night, and the sashes were lifted, and she could hear every sound that was produced.

She listened patiently to the music, to the chairman's speech, to all the preliminary proceedings, and to the observations made by Davis Cook.

How her heart beat, and the tears came into her eyes, when she heard Walter's name announced by the chairman! And with what joy she listened to the first

vibrations of his voice! As they fell upon her ear, there came upon her spirit once more that strange feeling she had known when she saw him long ago, that in some mysterious and wonderful way he belonged to her.

She had never before been present when he spoke in public, and she wondered at the ease with which he rounded out each eloquent sentence, and she exulted when the audience interrupted him again and again with cheers and clapping of hands. It was marvellous, she thought, how he had mastered the speaker's art.

"A born orator," she said to herself. "So much like he is when he speaks to me, and yet so much more splendid and glorious." She felt proud of him. "My Walter!" she murmured as she crouched there in the black night, and listened with rapture to the music of that voice which had always had rich music for her in its tones.

Drury spoke long, but she waited and thought the time much too short, and then, when he ended the speech, she walked out to the street with her shawl half drawn across her face, and went to her home and to her room, filled with delight, and yet with a great pain at her heart as she thought of the happiness she might have had if he could have seen her, and clasped her, and kissed her. It was terrible indeed that he should be so near to her, and yet that their separation should be as absolute and insurmountable as if the great ocean divided them.

There was no hope for her that night. The cup of sweetness was near to her lips, but she could not drink. But, indeed, if she could have known, if her spiritual sense could have been opened to perceive while she mourned and mourned until sleep brought sweet oblivion, Walter Drury, bidding good-night to uncle and aunt, who could hardly frame words to express their pride in him, walked slowly over to the house of John Hamilton and into the garden, and stood there looking with hungry eyes at the porch where he had sat with her when the flowers were blooming, at the window of her room all dark and silent, at the garden-paths where

they had gone together, and at the door through which he had wheeled her in her rolling-chair.

"One word of praise from her," he said, as he sauntered out upon the street again, "would be worth all the applause I had to-night. Emptiness! Yes, mere emptiness it is! Life is empty, and all is empty without her! Oh, my love!" he said, almost with a sob, as he walked toward the river and his uncle's house, "woe to me if you do not come to me! My love, my life, I would rather die than that you should not be mine!"

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CHAPTER XX

DIVINATION AND POLITICS

CAPTAIN BLUITT sat by his library table, beneath the lamp, reading an English translation of Cicero, and upon the other side of the table Miss Puella was busy stitching a garment for the Dorcas society at the church.

For a time neither spoke, but, while the Lar and the Penates upon the mantelpiece scowled strangely upon them, the captain was completely absorbed in his book, and the sister thought of the church, and of Walter, and of Dorothea, and of many other things.

After a while Captain Bluit turned the open book over upon the table, and rubbing his eyes, weary with much reading, said :

"Puella, do you believe in haruspication?"

"What's that? I don't understand you."

"Haruspication; I say, do you believe in it?"

"I don't know. It's not in our Catechism. The Episcopalians believe in it, I think."

"You don't understand me," said the captain. "Do you know what haruspication is?"

"Not exactly; something about bishops, isn't it? or total depravity or something?"

"No. Haruspication is the science of foretelling events by observing the interior parts of animals, chiefly chickens. It is not much in use in our times."

"I should think not! Why, brother, how perfectly absurd!"

"It strikes you that way, does it?"

"Of course."

"Well, maybe you're right. I guess you are; but I am trying to keep my mind open about it."

"But, brother, it is simply impossible for you to believe that we can predict future occurrences by examining the organs of chickens! I never heard such nonsense."

"It does seem unlikely, doesn't it? Why should the internal arrangements of a pullet have any bearing, for example—well, let us say on the late war with Mexico? It's hardly reasonable, is it, and yet some of the wisest of the ancient Romans believed it."

"How could they know about the war with Mexico?"

"You misunderstand me. I mean they believed that by inspecting a fowl in that manner, they could tell how *any* war would turn out—who would win."

"No Roman with good sense ever thought so."

"Yes, here's Cicero," said the captain, taking up the book, "he says that 'nearly every one has recourse to the organs of animals,' and that 'our own countrymen have never undertaken any martial enterprise without inspection of organs.'"

"Did Cicero actually believe such stuff?"

"I haven't read far enough to find out; but I have a notion he did. Let me read you what the man says: 'The presages which we deduce from examination of a victim's organs, are founded upon the accurate observations of many centuries.' Then he goes on to say that 'Flaminius, in the second Punic War, was about to move his army against Hannibal, when the augur insisted that he should first consult the consecrated chickens.' Think of that, Puella! Consecrated chickens!"

"Did he do it?"

"I think so."

"Well, who beat?"

"Cicero doesn't say. I'll have to look that up. But notice that everybody seems to have practised haruspication, and those were the smartest people the world ever saw—the very smartest."

"I don't care how smart they were, I'll never believe such foolishness."

"He mentions also," said Captain Bluit, turning over the leaves of the book, "that a little before Cæsar's death, the first time Cæsar sat on his golden throne, the ox that was sacrificed had no heart; and the second ox, sacrificed the next day, had no liver."

"What did that mean?"

"Why, that Cæsar was going to be killed."

"How ridiculous! An ox couldn't possibly live without a heart."

"Cicero takes pains to remark that 'we must suppose the organ to have been annihilated by Providence at the very instant the sacrifice was offered.' That's the way he accounts for it."

"That doesn't account for it to me."

"But the heart seems to have been considered not so important as some of the other organs. In the case of consecrated chickens, the condition of the gall was regarded as the most significant of the indications."

"What did it signify?"

"Well, Cicero isn't perfectly clear; but he says everybody knew there was trouble ahead—or words to that effect—if you found a cleft in the chicken's liver. Seems queer, doesn't it?"

"It would be queer if it were true."

"And then, it appears that there were other ways of foretelling events. One was by watching a flight of birds, and another was by observing thunderstorms. I wish I knew how they worked the system."

"Why it didn't work; that was the way."

"Well, then, how they thought it worked. For instance, what kind of a thing did a thunderstorm indicate when it came up in a particular kind of way. All thunderstorms seem about alike to me."

"And to me."

"Suppose, for instance, a cleft in a chicken-liver, on a given day in Rome, meant that there would be a fire or a flood the next day; what I want to know is, what would a cleft in a chicken-liver in Turley mean tomorrow? I wish Cicero had given the rules."

"Just for curiosity's sake?"

"Yes, of course."

Then Captain Bluitt was silent for a few moments, and looked at the Lar on the mantelpiece, while Miss Bluitt sewed. At last he said:

"Puella, you know I'm going away on Saturday to attend that lawsuit in New York, and won't be home for a month or more."

"Well?"

"And the election comes off on Tuesday, just after I am gone."

"Yes."

"I should like mighty well to know how that election is going."

"I will write to you at once."

"Yes, of course; but I mean beforehand; about Rufus. It can't be possible that the people will put that blockhead into the School Board."

"No."

"I wish I knew. Not that it makes any great difference; but I am curious about it."

Then Captain Bluitt fell silent again. He glanced at his sister, and finally said:

"Puella."

"Well?"

"I am going to propose something a little bit unusual. Maybe you'll say it's ridiculous. But do you know I have half a notion to try how that chicken-liver business will work with Rufus? Now don't make fun of it!"

"You're not actually going to be so foolish?"

"Oh, well! I admit that it is foolish. I have no faith in it, of course. But the Romans were not foolish people. They must have had *some* ground for believing in it. Cicero, you know, said that it was founded on accurate observations made for centuries. I'd like to see if there is anything in it, one way or the other."

"It is a great pity to waste a good chicken on such nonsense."

"You needn't waste it. We will have it for dinner. And, Puella?"

"Well?"

"Mind you don't say anything to Dr. Frobisher about it, or he'll hunt up a text and write a sermon against that sort of thing."

"It is heathenish."

"Very well! But it's harmless. No man can do permanent injury to any sound church organization by inspecting the interior of a chicken. I'm going to try it to-morrow, anyhow."

In the morning Captain Bluitt, resolute to make a venture into the unknown regions of haruspication, directed Rufus to catch a hen and decapitate it.

These operations having been successfully performed, Captain Bluitt took the fowl, and entered the wood-shed, carefully closing and bolting the door.

He remained within for a considerable length of time, and then, unbolting the door, he reappeared, and going into the house, washed his hands.

As he entered the library where Miss Bluitt sat, sewing, he seemed flushed and warm; but he tried to look cheerful.

"How did it turn out?" asked his sister.

"Oh, well! I'm not much used to that kind of thing, and of course I don't really know what the rules are."

"Was there anything peculiar about the chicken?"

"Not so very peculiar. The gizzard seemed to me to be just a little unusual; but I'm not perfectly certain."

"No cleft in the liver?"

"Not that I could see. It looked about as livers ought to look, I should think."

"Then you've lost your faith in Cicero?"

"You really can't say I had faith in him; not faith. I just wanted to look into the theory a little."

"And you reached no conclusions?"

"Well, Puella, not exactly conclusions; not what you would call final conclusions; just impressions."

"What kind of impressions?"

"I know you will think it absurd, but do you know, Puella, there really was something about the appearance

of that chicken that forced into my mind the idea that Rufus will be defeated?"

"What was the appearance?"

"I don't know. Nothing in particular. Just a vague notion that came to me the moment I began to study the thing."

"Maybe if you had another kind of a chicken, you would get another kind of vague notion?"

"Maybe so, but once is enough. I'm not going to try it again."

"You'll believe in the system, will you, if Rufus should be defeated?"

"I don't say that; no, not that; but I'm glad I tried the experiment anyway, just as a matter of historical interest."

"How do you want the chicken cooked to-morrow?"

"That chicker?"

"Yes."

"Why, Puella, that is a consecrated chicken."

"You said we could eat it."

"Well, I did think so last night; but do you know, Puella, I couldn't eat a particle of it now! I should have a strange kind of feeling that I was taking bites out of Rufus. I have him sort of identified with it in my mind."

Then Captain Bluitt took down his volume of Cicero, and began to read the concluding pages of *De Divinatione*.

On the day before the election, Colonel Bly, who was stopping at the Eagle Hotel in Turley, found himself far from well. The colonel did not often meddle directly with small local elections, such as that in which Turley was about to engage; but he was filled with malignant animosity for Davis Cook, and he knew that, with fair play, the chance was good that Davis would be successful. So he had run down to Turley to lend the influence of his presence to the struggle in which his ~~se~~s were engaged, and to give to them the benefit of his counsel and of his trained experience, if there should be necessity to resort to bold measures to overthrow the insolent plumber.

It was the frequent practice of the colonel to turn aside from the task of directing the government of his dominions, and to seek recuperation and diversion in the generous consumption of fluids of an exhilarating nature. This propensity was well known to his subjects, and those of them that were thoroughly loyal to him, seemed to discover in it one more reason why they should give him a full measure of devotion. They recognized the fact that no one man can have absolutely all the virtues, and that so great a man as the colonel should be overborne now and then by so amiable and pardonable a weakness, made him really more admirable. When the word went around among his faithful followers that "the old man" was "having one of his spells," every man of them, from Billy Grimes downward, smiled in a sad sort of way, and wondered what would become of the commonwealth if the colonel, one day, in the crisis of one of his spells, should be whisked off into eternity.

Nobody cared to speculate what would become of the colonel, in such an event. The persons who held what were regarded as sound, orthodox, religious opinions, thought it not worth while to speculate. They felt that they knew.

It was one of the milder of his spells that assailed the colonel at the Eagle Hotel, and it soon passed off; but it left him with a sharp attack of gout, and with depression of spirits that manifested itself in irritation when his serfs ventured to approach him.

After suffering for several hours, the colonel decided to summon Dr. Quelch, the most skilful physician in the neighbourhood, and a man for whom the colonel had high respect. Vice cannot help recognizing and secretly acknowledging the superiority of virtue.

When Dr. Quelch entered the room, he found Colonel Bly, half lying on a sofa, with one leg stretched horizontally upon that piece of furniture; with torn letters and envelopes and newspapers scattered upon the floor, with cigar-ashes sprinkling the statesman's clothes and the carpet, and with a half-consumed cigar lying upon a table that stood close to the sofa.

Dr. Quelch had visited the colonel before under somewhat similar conditions, and he was able to make an accurate diagnosis of the case as soon as he opened the door of the room and obtained a whiff of an atmosphere highly charged with alcoholic reminiscences.

Colonel Bly greeted the physician warmly, putting aside all evidences of irritability, and assuming that graciousness of manner which he was accustomed to employ with his people in the intervals of his spells.

The physician supplied medicine and advice to his patient, and then, upon a pressing invitation from the colonel, tarried for a bit of talk. The impending election naturally presented itself as a theme for conversation.

"You feel that you have the election pretty well in hand, do you, colonel?" asked the physician.

"Perfectly in hand. We shall win, of course. In fact, I might say that we have the votes counted."

"It is really wonderful," said Dr. Quelch, "how you exercise such control; but, of course, you know how to keep your own secrets," and the physician smiled.

Dr. Quelch had an impulse to study this creature, just as he would have inclined to inquire respecting the nature of any other morbid phenomenon.

"There are no secrets," answered the colonel. "You know as much about it as I do, doctor. I can't give you any information, I imagine."

"No, I don't know about it. I might make a good guess, but that would be all."

"Well," said Colonel Bly, "I know you are a safe man for me to talk to, although we are not upon the same side in politics. The theory upon which I work is this: find out what a man wants, and then tickle him with the idea that you are going to try to get it for him. That's the whole of it. That's all I know, anyway."

"What do most men want?"

Colonel Bly laughed.

"Now, doctor, surely you are not asking for information. Money, of course, and place."

"You can buy any man, then, you think?"

"It is better not to make extreme statements; but

you may say practically any man, or rather, perhaps, almost any man. Those that raw money won't reach, or who are not hungry for places and promotion for themselves or their relations, can usually be reached by flattery. You know how strong self-love is in men? You can't give them too much praise. Really it is astonishing to me sometimes how little of either money or praise will satisfy most men. Seven out of ten can be bought cheap, at any time."

"Women too, you believe?"

"That is a delicate subject," said the colonel, "but I have a notion you can extend the theory of purchasability pretty well over that sex. But you have to go a little more carefully. It is a mere matter of price, if you have the right kind of consideration to offer."

"It seems to me that is in fact an extreme statement," observed Dr. Quelch.

"Maybe it is; but you can cover the whole case if you simply say that every man, with few exceptions, is first of all looking out for himself. He has what they call 'the main chance' steadily in view; or to put it in another slang phrase, he takes care of number one first and last and all the time. Now, doctor, it is hardly necessary to say that, when all hands are hungry to sell, the man who comes along with the most money and the best nerve will get what he wants, sure. There is no secret about it. I'm never half so anxious to win as the herd is to have me tip them and get them to help me win."

"I should hardly suppose a man holding your views of human nature would think the people fit for self-government."

"Fit for self-government! Why, doctor, the idea is ridiculous. The mass of them haven't the smallest qualification for the performance of that function. The best thing that can happen to them is to have their superiors take care of them. I am their superior, and so are you. Take a man who always votes a straight ticket, as most of them do, and brags about it. Now there's a man who hasn't got sense enough to see that if he wants

to help govern, he must discriminate among all the candidates. His one chance is to cut his ticket; but he prides himself on not doing it. Then, you see, I make the ticket for him, and I've got him. After all, that is my best hold. I would never have the least chance if the voters would always pick and choose among the candidates. The theory is that they will do so; but they don't, and so long as they don't, I can do exactly as I please. I control the situation."

"I am sorry to say that you seem to have some warrant for your theory," interposed Dr. Quelch.

"If they were capable of governing themselves," continued Colonel Bly, "they wouldn't let me govern them. The truth is most men like to have somebody to lean on—somebody to take care of them; and mighty few of them really know anything about politics and public affairs. Start them to whooping for 'the old flag,' and you can lead them anywhere. Men admire success. What have I done to excite enthusiasm? Nothing, except to give some of the crowd offices; yet they applaud me and run after me as if I were a great public benefactor. I tell you, doctor, that, taking men by and large, they are rather a poor lot—only fit to be directed."

"Your opinion, however, runs quite contrary to the theories upon which the fabric of this government was constructed," said Dr. Quelch, "but maybe our forefathers were wrong."

"Dead wrong as a matter of practice, although the theories look and sound well. You can see for yourself how, in actual practice, the people want me to manage them. If I do it I must have compensation for my talent and effort. I love power and money, and I get both. Isn't it perfectly evident that the people are glad to pay the price? You can't unseat me in this state any more than if I were emperor. No doubt you're a smarter man than I am, and some people might call you a better one; but if you should run against me in an election, I could beat you in your own community. The reason is I control the machine, and I do so because,

being in power, I have favours and promises to give, and you, being out of power, have none."

"I am confident," said the physician, "that you could defeat me at the polls; but you will never have a chance. I would not accept a political nomination."

Colonel Bly smiled as he said:

"You couldn't get a nomination without my consent. I mean a nomination on the Democratic ticket. It strikes me as a little bit odd, though, doctor, that you never entered politics. But then I don't pretend to get hold of your theory of life. Why, for example, you bother yourself about niggers surpasses my understanding. It's hard to believe that a man like you, well fixed and comfortable, really can care because a nigger is being kicked about, down in Georgia. What difference can it make to you or me how much he is kicked?"

"Men see these things differently," said Dr. Quelch, quietly. He began to feel as if an inquiry of this kind cost almost too much.

"It's the same way about money," continued Colonel Bly. "Pardon me for referring to it; but it has been reported everywhere that when Mrs. Rawson of Birney died and left you her handsome property, you refused to take a dollar of it."

"I thought her relations should have it," said Dr. Quelch.

"Well, as you say, we don't look at these matters in the same way. You had a right to refuse it; but that wouldn't have been my way."

"Referring to your political operations," said Dr. Quelch, wishing to change the subject of conversation, "it is necessary, of course, frequently to disregard the law?"

"Why, yes!" answered the colonel, smiling, "just as you disregard it when you help niggers to run away from their masters."

Dr. Quelch winced a little bit; but he felt that it was not worth while to take up that branch of the subject with the colonel.

"Laws," continued Colonel Bly, "are useful just to

compel ignorant people to keep hands off, while superior men fill their own pockets and get all they want. Law always has been set aside, and it always will be, by great men, wherever it offers obstruction to their purposes—Napoleon, for example."

"Well," said Dr. Quelch, "but do you make no distinction between righteousness and unrighteousness?"

"Don't you think those are mere words? The talk about righteousness has its uses. It is good to amuse weak people. That is what the preachers are for. They help me. These terms satisfy sentimentalists, but they are really void of meaning. The only right is might—triumphant might of brain or muscle. The strong man is right if he wins, and wrong if he loses."

"It is your notion, then, that Washington and Benedict Arnold, for example, stand about on the same plane?"

"Of course now, Dr. Quelch, I am speaking to you as one gentleman to another," said the colonel, and Dr. Quelch felt as a man does who is conscious of a stench reeking in his nostrils. "And what I say as a practical politician is this—Arnold thought his cause was lost, and he took cash to quit—just as I said, taking care of himself. If it *had* been lost, he would have been on top, and Washington would have been hanged. Arnold played to win and lost the game, but it was a bold play, and if the game had gone the other way, posterity would have judged him differently. That's my view."

Dr. Quelch looked grave. He rose from his chair and walked to the window and back again. Stopping in front of Bly, who watched him as if he were studying the doctor quite as keenly as the doctor was studying him, Dr. Quelch said:

"God is left clear out, of course, in your transactions?"

Colonel Bly tipped back his chair, feeling that, for his part, the discussion had gone almost far enough.

"God!" exclaimed he. "I've heard a good deal about Him, but He doesn't seem to be in the game at all. Where is He? Why doesn't He talk? Why doesn't He show himself, and interfere? Look at history. Look over the field of human action, and tell me where He

comes in! Why didn't He meddle when Cæsar stamped the world under his feet? Why didn't He stop the French Revolution? Why doesn't He help the suffering women and children that call for Him? You think the slaves are frightfully wronged. Why doesn't God take up their cause?"

"Perhaps He will," replied Dr. Quelch.

"You will never live to see it," said the colonel.

"God! I never notice that He lends a hand where the hand is most needed. If there is a God, he helps those that are in religion for dollars! Can you pray a church out of debt? I guess not! When the church-people want to lift a mortgage they come to me, and I help them, because I believe in helping anything that will teach the inferior classes that they should submit to be ruled. The church-people don't ask me where I got the money, except that fool Davis Cook, and I'll settle with him!"

"Your whole view, then," remarked the doctor, "is confined to this life only?"

"Why, certainly. What is the use of sensible men considering hereafter? Hereafter? Doctor, you know well enough that all the evidence supplied by your profession points to annihilation. You get no trace of the immortality of the soul, now do you? Hereafter? There is none. When a man dies he is just wiped out. Depend upon it, the man who wins the game here wins the only game there is."

Later in the day the local committee, headed by Billy Grimes, met in Colonel Bly's apartment to give to him an account of the movement of the campaign, to sum up results, and to make final arrangements for the operations of to-morrow.

Billy Grimes sat at the table and handled the papers, and from time to time, "workers" came in to bring reports and to receive instructions.

Mr. Grimes was fully acquainted with the facts respecting the situation in all the wards, and he considered the prospect for his party more than encouraging everywhere but in the Third Ward, where Davis Cook, the

renegade and the personal enemy of the revered head of the party, was conducting his battle with such energy and spirit as surprised even the persons who had never suspected the plumber of being a torpid person.

Davis had called at every house in the ward ; he had shaken hands with all the men, said gracious words to all the women whom he could see, patted all the children who could walk, kissed nearly all the infants in arms, smiled at the grandmothers, given cigars to all the grandfathers who smoked, and in several instances had gratuitously supplied invaluable professional advice to the hired girls about bath-boilers, spigots and water-backs. He had made a contribution to the Baptist organ-fund, bought six tickets for the Methodist fair ; taken fifteen chances in a contest for a gold watch at the Catholic festival, and fixed all the gas-lights for nothing in the room where the Lutherans held their concert, and not only had he used the plain language successfully when arranging with the Friends for repairing the spouting on the meeting-house, but he threw off half his bill when he presented it for settlement.

During the campaign he rescued Jacob Gessler's little girl from a dog that had attacked her ; helped John Dunglinson's wife to mend the harness on her horse when a break occurred in front of Robinson's grocery ; lent Joe Blumenthal five dollars to pay a bill that was pressing him ; went bail for two Democrats who were arrested for fighting ; gave the coloured Ebenezer church a new and brilliantly red cushion for the pulpit ; bought a set of American colours for the Turley Boat Club ; presented Shakespeare's works bound in blue and gold and with notes, to the Garrick Dramatic Club, and drove home Mrs. McMinness's cow when he found it astray out on the Donovan road.

"He is putting up a stiff fight," said Billy Grimes to Colonel Bly, as the story of these achievements was related. A stiff fight indeed. Davis was a fighter. He would win gloriously, or he would fail, because no man could win against such odds as Billy Grimes and the colonel's organization had on their side. Even Billy,

as he considered the plumber, had a feeling of admiration for him.

"What wouldn't a man like that be worth to us if he only had sense enough to fall in with the faithful," said Mr. Grimes.

But he must be beaten, and Billy was confident that the task could be performed.

There were two hundred and twenty Democrats in the Third Ward. The reports showed that nine of these were away from town, and would not be home until after the election. It had been ascertained also that five Democrats, hitherto faithful, had declared openly for Davis, and would surely vote for him. One of these was Jacob Gessler, who was impelled by gratitude for the rescue of his child. The other four belonged to the same lodge of the Knights of Pythias that Davis was a member of. Three other Democrats were sick abed.

Thus Mr. Grimes discovered that there were only two hundred and three Democrats in the ward upon whose votes he could count with feelings of confidence.

Now it was known that there were in the ward one hundred and eighty-seven Whigs who were at home, in vigorous health, and fully charged with enthusiasm for Davis Cook.

If Davis had had no more voters than these, defeat would already be assured, but Mr. Grimes had discovered that twelve Know Nothings had been seduced from loyalty to their own party, and had rallied to the plumber's standard, because they were Odd Fellows, or Red Men, or Knights of Pythias, or Sons of America. As Mr. Grimes considered this scandalous breaking down of party lines, he said:

"These secret societies ought to be suppressed. They are a menace to free government," and Colonel Bly, whose solicitude for the maintenance of free institutions was just as intense as Billy's, gave warm approval to the suggestion.

Davis Cook, therefore, had one hundred and ninety-nine votes so far, and the Democratic majority had been whittled down to four, when a worker came into the

room with the depressing information that two of the Prohibitionists, the Baptist deacon and one other man, were going to vote for Davis, because he was a total abstainer and a pronounced advocate of the temperance cause.

Billy Grimes felt as if things were giving away beneath his feet, and even the colonel could not restrain himself from expressing, in language that no self-respecting printer would consent to put into type, the view taken by him of temperance people generally, and of the Turley plumber in particular.

A possible majority of two offered a margin too narrow for safety. Two Democrats might be taken ill, or might be won over by the astonishing allurements presented by Cook, or might drink to excess, or might encounter any one of a thousand possible accidents. More men must be had somewhere. But where?

There were eight voters in the almshouse who had been bought up by the Whigs, and who had resisted all efforts to induce them to change their minds.

"None of them can read, can they?" asked Billy Grimes of the man who brought him the information.

"No."

"Well, you give some man ten dollars to steal the ballots the Whigs gave them and to put our ticket in their hands."

"No," said Colonel Bly, with emphasis, "go to the superintendent and hand him fifty dollars, and tell him to threaten the paupers with half-rations if they don't vote our way, and let him know that he'll lose his job on the first of the month if those fellows vote wrong."

"That will fix them, I guess," said Mr. Grimes, with admiration for the colonel.

There were six very old and infirm Democrats in the ward, loyal to the party and to the colonel, who could not walk to the polls, and it was Mr. Grimes's custom to bring them to the polls in carriages.

He was disgusted to learn that the Whigs this year had hired every public conveyance in the town for the whole of the election day, and that the veteran Demo-

crats would probably have to remain at home. Not a member of the party in Turley owned a carriage. One of Mr. Grimes's lieutenants proposed to bring the veterans around in wheelbarrows, but this suggestion was not accepted, for fear the veterans might regard that method of conveyance as wanting in dignity. Mr. Grimes solved the problem by sending a messenger off to the town of Donovan to engage four Democratic hacks and hack-drivers to come up to Turley to stay all night.

By midnight all the reports were in, and victory seemed to be assured for Rufus Potter and the regular ticket. Billy Grimes went home, feeling tolerably comfortable, but anxious, and the colonel retired to rest with the conviction that Billy had not been doing so well lately as he once did, and that the time was near when measures might have to be taken to appoint his successor.

But, in truth, the colonel had no good reason for complaint. All the Democrats who were expected to vote for the regular ticket did so, and six of the eight voters in the almshouse, yielding to threats and solicitation, polled the Democratic ticket. Besides, one of the Prohibitionists suddenly had conscientious scruples in the night about voting the Whig ticket, and he backed out. Thus when the polls closed and the ballots were counted, it was found that Rufus Potter had a majority of sixteen votes.

The American methods of haruspication really seemed to have been defective.

CHAPTER XXI

PRINCE BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY

ON the day before the election the Indian prince, Bunder Poot Singh, returned to Turley to pay the long-promised visit. His coming had been delayed much beyond the date that had been named by him upon the occasion of his first appearance in the town ; and this was accounted for by the fact that the Indian had found high favour wherever he had gone, and he had been entreated to prolong his stay among the people who found so much pleasure in his social qualities, and in the manifestations of his really remarkable power as an orator.

But at last he came back to Turley, where a welcome, not less hearty and eager than had been given him in other towns, awaited him.

Dr. Frobisher was at the little railway-station when the train came in, and Prince Bunder Poot Singh stepped out upon the platform with his satchel in his hand.

The loungers about the station gazed curiously at him while he lingered to direct Saul Tarsel's movements with his baggage. He wore a graceful flowing costume of brown colour, tied with a sash of blue silk, and on his head was a white turban. "Not a bit like a black man," said one of the observers, looking at his straight dark hair, his thin arched nose, his beautifully-formed lips. The prince nearly always made a good first impression, and the Turleyites who looked upon his manly beauty as he stood there, tall, straight, and handsome, admired him without reservation.

BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY 341

Stepping into the carriage with Dr. Frobisher, he drove to the clergyman's house, where Mrs. Frobisher met him and welcomed him, and declared that he should be her guest so long as he should tarry in Turley.

When he had come down from his chamber to the living-room of the parsonage, the prince informed Dr. and Mrs. Frobisher that he considered it right, first of all, that he should present his credentials.

The minister insisted that this was by no means necessary, but Bunder Poot would not permit the formality to be waived ; and soon Dr. Frobisher learned that his visitor's letters were from eminent members of the government of India, from leading missionaries, from well-known philanthropists in England, from officers of important religious societies in America, and from several American clergymen of influence and high standing.

There is small reason for saying that these papers were conclusive, and that Dr. and Mrs. Frobisher infused additional fervour, if that were possible, into their entreaty that the Indian would make their poor house, so little like his own splendid palace, his home while Turley had the favour of his presence.

This invitation was graciously accepted by the visitor.

After tea, Dr. Frobisher had family prayers, and as the prince was a devoted Christian, having lost at home more than can be described in prestige and fortune because he had experienced conversion, the minister, when he had read the Scriptures, invited his guest to lead in prayer, and this he did with his soft sweet voice, in a manner which Mrs. Frobisher afterwards described as "inexpressibly affecting ; the doctor himself could not use more touching language."

Worship ended, the prince folded his arms and crossed his legs while he explained more fully the purpose for which he had forsaken his own dear land, and come to the home of the stranger.

No sooner had he been convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, and had yielded himself to it, than his heart began to yearn for the wretched and forlorn

pariahs of his own-land. He felt that he *must* do something, not only to improve their physical condition, but to bring to their darkened minds the blessed light of the Gospel. Bunder Poot then described the nature of the work he had done, in establishing schools and missions, and in distributing rations to the hungry, and how much the larger portion of his fortune had been spent in carrying forward his plans. When he felt that the good work had grown almost too large even for the wealth of a rich man, the thought had occurred to him that he might obtain help from his fellow-Christians in far-away Europe and America, who had always shown affectionate solicitude for his unhappy fellow-countrymen, and who would no doubt be glad to help him in the important philanthropic task that he had now undertaken.

The prince settled down to life in Turley with a declared purpose to extend his visit far into the coming winter.

That he might have a fit place in which to conduct his large correspondence, and to attend to the general business of his mission without interruption or distraction, Dr. Frobisher turned over to him the pastor's study at the church; and here with a warm fire in the stove, with comfortable chairs, a lounge, a nice table and a book-case, the prince began his work. The doctor's favourite picture of Little Samuel in a devotional attitude, looked down upon him from the wall; and Saul Tarsel waited in the church, or in the vicinity of the church, to do the bidding of the visitor.

"He's jes a brown man, lek I am," said Saul, "but he's one o' de quality folks, while I'se on'y a nigger."

The interest aroused by this visit may be imagined if we will consider how prosy and dull life may become in a small town whose people spent their lives among groceries, shoe-manufacturing and house-keeping, and how the appearance in so dull a community of a being from the Orient, a being wholly unlike any Turleyite, or kinsman of a Turleyite, in colour, dress, or manners, would surely affect the popular imagination. It really seemed as if a fairy story had been suddenly interwoven

BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY 343

with the dull drama of life; as if a patch of splendid colour had been projected upon the sober grey of Turleyian existence. Not only was the visitor a native of those mysterious lands of the East where were found civilizations whose origin was lost in the mists of tradition; of lands where there was strange learning, and whence came the literature that dealt with the obscurest spiritual problems, but he was a man of a kingly race, carrying in his veins the blood of how many monarchs, in whose palaces were gems of priceless value, and who held the power of life and death for uncountable centuries over subject populations! This man of noble ancestry, with history back of him and mystery about him, had actually been projected by Fate into the American town of Turley, where the light of civilization shone but to show how threadbare and homely and uninteresting common American life may be.

Mr. Matlack and some of the other Know Nothings found reason to fear, from the very first, that the presence of this august and splendid personage in Turley, clad in raiment wholly unknown in lands where freedom reigned, might begin a movement which would tend to undermine American institutions. Heretofore, Mr. Matlack urged, the despots of distant lands had exerted their destructive influences from afar; but now, one of them had boldly invaded the territories of the Republic, and under the disguise of religious enthusiasm, was probably beginning to sap the vitality of our glorious system of free popular government. The man had influence as soon as he entered Turley. That he was handsome was much; that he had fabulous wealth, was more; but that he was a prince was a stupendous fact, and Turley, stiffly republican as it had always been, could not restrain itself from experiencing a sense of mixed awe and reverence when it considered this personage of royal lineage.

The fine figure of the prince became a familiar object upon the streets. He had no affectations, no haughtiness. He went everywhere, and everywhere manifested the absence of reserve which is so often found in personages

whose high position is fully assured. It was indeed interesting, and even touching, to observe the refined grace and kindliness with which he met the plainest people, when he encountered them upon the public thoroughfares, exchanging greetings with them as if there were no distance between them.

He acted always like a highly-bred American citizen, and not as Turley would have expected a man to act who was the heir of a line of a hundred princes stretching back into prehistoric times.

Even Mr. Matlack grew to like him, though Mr. Matlack persisted in being wary, and in having everything ready to counteract any pernicious influence which the prince might be preparing surreptitiously to spring upon Mr. Matlack's beloved country; and Rufus Potter, who at first stupidly insisted that the prince was a coloured man whom he used to see driving an express wagon in Knoxville in 1847, surrendered his conviction and his prejudice when the prince bowed to him upon the street and said, "Good-morning, Mr. Potter!" Rufus then frankly confessed that he was mistaken, and that the man he knew in Knoxville had curly hair, a stub-nose, and a complexion four shades nearer to black.

Bunder Poot Singh appeared to be very fond of social functions, where his grace of word and manner almost endeared him to those who had the privilege of knowing him closely.

Early in his sojourn Mrs. Frobisher gave a tea at which the prince appeared in yellow satin coat and trousers, with a red sash and a white turban, in the front of which glowed a great ruby of huge value. Nobody knew just how the story got about, but it was generally said that this splendid stone had been in the prince's family since the reign of his ancestor Rajah Bunder Boom Peet in the year 407, and that for a thousand years before that time it had been the eye of an idol in the temple of Bamram-jampore.

The sensation created among the ladies of Turley by the ruby and the yellow satin costume can hardly be indicated by language. Really it amounted to emotion

BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY 345

—deep emotion; and even Florabella Burns, who had come home again, and was unavoidably involved in this movement that whirled around the person of the prince, could hardly succeed, amid the excitement and the enthusiastic admiration expressed for the prince by the other ladies, in holding firm to the prejudices most unreasonably formed by her against this most charming man.

Mrs. Frobisher, when she heard that Florabella was doubtful, said with scorn:

"How ridiculous! Some people never believe anything."

Tea after tea was given by the families connected with the Presbyterian church, and to each one of them the prince graciously came, sometimes in the yellow satin trousers, sometimes in trousers of crimson silk, or of blue silk, or of white silk, but always with the white turban, and the priceless ancestral ruby which had once served the purposes of an impure religion.

Society in Turley, for a few weeks after the arrival of Bunder Poot Singh, was really almost too giddy for its spiritual welfare. Dr. Frobisher hoped that the feverishness of the excitement would speedily abate.

Delightful however as the visitor was in society, he was found to be most charming in the quiet seclusion of home. To Mrs. Frobisher his presence was a source of perpetual delight. She had long talks with him. To her he told much of the history of his family, and he left the impression on her mind, though she could not say that she clearly understood him, that his great-grandfather had been a devotee, and had for years swung round and round a pole with a hook fastened in the muscles of his back.

Mrs. Frobisher explained to him that her ancestor, Commissary-General Smith, had served with Braddock, and she was sorry, though not surprised, to find that Bunder Poot had never heard of Braddock. But he manifested most kindly and sympathetic interest when she explained that General Braddock was an officer of the army of that great nation which had brought civiliz-

ation and the Christian faith to idolatrous India, and that the general had been killed upon the battlefield, and brought home in one of the wagons supplied by her ancestor, General Smith.

Mrs. Frobisher more than once mentioned incidentally, but with emphasis, that her mother was a Metcalf of Aramingo, for she had a feeling in her mind that even some little tawdry shreds of family grandeur had better be waved at this man of splendid ancestry, rather than that he should class her with the vulgar herd of Turley people, most of whom did not know anything of their great-grandfathers, and would have been ashamed of it had they known anything.

It was in some degree painful to Mrs. Frobisher, in whose eyes the Metcalfs had always seemed to possess a very high flavour of aristocracy, to find that they had rather a plebeian look when they were brought directly into the glare of the glorious light that shone from the family records of Bunder Poot Singh and his mighty forefather, Rajah Bunder Boom Peet ; but the depressed feeling passed off when she discovered that the prince really appeared to become more and more deferential in his bearing towards her, after she had informed him for the ninth or tenth time that she herself was a Metcalf of Aramingo.

"Perhaps, even in his far distant land, amidst the cares of state and the glories of his throne-room, he may have heard something of us."

But it was not so. No rumour of the importance of the Metcalfs of Aramingo had been wafted across the seas, and carried by the spicy breezes of India into the glorious palace of Bunder Poot Singh. Bunder was indeed impressed in some measure by the strong persistence with which Mrs. Frobisher urged upon him the fact that she was a Metcalf of Aramingo, and while he was too prudent to betray to her his interest or his curiosity, he did choose an early opportunity, when he met Florabella Burns alone, to ask her :

"Please, Mrs. Burns, what is a Metcalf?"

Dr. Frobisher was grateful to discover that the plea-

BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY 347

tures of a rather intense social life had no power to divert Bunder Poot Singh from the purposes of his mission. He took deep interest in the work of the church, attending all the services, visiting the prayer-meetings, and participating in the devotions, and sometimes speaking briefly. He had not preached another long sermon to the congregation. He said to Dr. Frobisher that he should prefer to do that upon a later day, when he had more thoroughly arranged his plans, and had acquired better acquaintance with the people of Turley.

The prince was well aware that every day he made among the people of the town new friends for himself, and gained strength for his cause. When he should make his final appeal for help, he would make it with power to hearers who would be in sympathy with him as a friend, as well as a missionary.

But the prince spoke to the Sunday School more than once about life in India, and gave a most impressive and even painful account of the hateful ceremonies connected with the car of Juggernaut. The superintendent of the school told his wife that he thought, but was not quite certain, that the prince himself, before conversion, had once actually helped to pull the car, and that his aunt had been ground to death beneath its wheels.

To the General Culture Society, at the earnest request of the president, Mrs. Frobisher, he spoke twice upon the subject of "The Alleviation of the Condition of the Hindu Women," and his addresses were so persuasive that the society resolved to take up that work at once in a practical way.

Bunder Poot Singh seemed inclined to prefer the society of ladies, and he was a favourite with all of them—with all save one. His remarkably good taste was demonstrated by his very warm admiration for Mrs. Burns. Always he showed to her marked attention when he met her at the teas and meetings, and he had called upon her at her house. The feeling in Turley was that Mrs. Burns might have a chance, before the winter was ended, of participating in the making of a singular and really brilliant match. But this was one

of the cases in which two souls did not simultaneously find themselves filled with reciprocal yearnings.

Mrs. Burns did not even feel that the favour for her manifested by the distinguished Oriental had in it anything in the nature of a compliment. She had for him a stronger aversion than before, and she refused his invitations to dine with him, to walk with him, or to accept him as an escort to her home from some of the functions. No doubt Bunder was discouraged by the irresponsible conduct of Florabella, but he had the warm impulses of the children of the East, and one afternoon when he had insisted upon seeing her at her own home, he literally flung himself at her feet, and abruptly declared his love for her.

Florabella was indignant, but self-possessed. Rising, she said :

"You have no right to make such a declaration to me! I cannot hear of such a thing. It is simply shocking for you to address me in this manner."

And then, as Bunder took his leave in dismay and anger, she sat down and wrote to Captain Bluitt, with whom in his absence from home she conducted correspondence upon business and other matters, an indignant letter relating the occurrence, and declaring that Bunder's conduct was a manifestation of sheer impertinence.

When next Mrs. Burns saw Dorothea, she told her also of the incident, and for the first time for months the young girl laughed, and said :

"I am so glad you refused him! He would have taken you off to his Indian palace, and there, covered with jewels and dressed in queer clothes, you would have forgotten me and old Turley, and all your friends."

"It was perfectly scandalous," said Florabella, who was too vexed to laugh. "But I will never desert you, my dear," and then she put her arms about Dorothea and kissed her.

"We must," she said, "somehow end this dreadful matter of yours with Walter. Oh, why was I not at home to take it up and settle it during the summer?"

BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY 349

"There will be no end, I fear," answered Dorothea, her gaiety all gone, "no end unless father shall change his mind."

"I will talk to him about it."

"And oh, Mrs. Burns, what has become of Walter? If he loves me, why does he not write to me? I hear of his going about with another girl. It cannot be—no, it cannot—that he has ceased to care for me!"

"Certainly not! He has too much sense for that. Depend upon it, Dorry, there is something wrong of which we have no suspicion. What if he *has* written to you?"

"Then I should have received his letters."

Mrs. Burns was silent for a moment. She would not speak her thought.

"Well," she said at length, "we must see about it. I will write to him myself."

Judge McGann still struggled with motor difficulties and hitches in his workshop, but hope sprang eternal in his breast. His faith in the motor, and in the magnificence of the dimensions of the fortune that awaited him, was strong as ever.

Miss Bluitt had been out to see the motor again, and was so delighted with it when she saw it really in operation, that Judge McGann offered to explain the principles underlying the machine when he should call at her house some evening. Thereupon she invited him to take tea with her, and as she had been very lonely in her brother's absence, it was really delightful to have this original and gifted man with her to reveal to her the secrets of one of the most remarkable inventions of the century, and to tell her also of his adventures during the war with Mexico.

Bunder Poot Singh found his way to the inventor's studio before he had been in Turley many days, and his keen mind at once appreciated the value of the motor. He watched it for a long time, and when he had heard McGann tell of the great things the machine would do, he said:

"It is wonderful; I should like to become part owner

of that machine. It would accomplish great things for India."

Before October was half gone the time had come for John Hamilton to pay to Judge McGann the five thousand dollars representing the second instalment of the purchase-money; and McGann, of course, was eager to have the payment made. Almost all of the first five thousand had disappeared, and the patents were not yet completed.

Hamilton filched the money from the vaults of the bank one afternoon, almost without any feeling of compunction; and when the bank was closed he walked out to the workshop and saw McGann.

"Is there nothing from Washington yet?" he asked.

"No," answered McGann. "The full papers are not here, but that makes no difference. They will come before long."

"It makes little difference, maybe, whether the patent papers come sooner or later," said Hamilton, "but it will make a big difference, judge, if you don't contrive to have that current carry over a longer distance."

"Now, don't worry about that," responded McGann. "That is only a matter of a little more experiment. I have the theory perfectly in my mind, and I only have to work out the details of the mechanical device."

"If you should die, that wouldn't be worth much to me."

"My gracious, man!" said the judge, "you could get your money back twice over for that motor just as it stands! The patents that are pending will command big prices in five years if I don't live another minute."

"Five years!" said Hamilton, despondently.

"Well, what about five years?" demanded the judge almost angrily. "You don't expect an invention like this, which never had any precedents to go by, but started right from a brand-new idea, to jump into existence absolutely complete and faultless in five minutes or five months! Things don't act in that way—not by a great deal."

Hamilton did not reply.

"You're dissatisfied, aren't you?" asked McGann.

BUNDER POOT SINGH RETURNS TO TURLEY 351

"Not just that; but——"

"Well, as I said to you long ago, if you don't want to go on, just drop it. Bluitt will buy you out; Miss Bluitt will buy you out; and it isn't four days since that Indian as good as said to me that he would put money into the motor if I would give him the chance. I'll sell your claim for you, if you want me to; only I wish you would speak quick, for I need the money."

"I have it in my pocket," said Hamilton, whose fears had been somewhat dissipated by the assurance that other people were eager to invest.

The cashier went over to the judge's desk, near to the window, and taking out the bank-notes, spread them about in bunches, so that they could be more easily counted.

First he counted them himself, very carefully. Then Judge McGann took them up and counted them, not very carefully. With the notes lying openly upon the desk, the two men engaged in some further talk about the motor and about the patents, and then Judge McGann sat down to write out the receipt. As Hamilton handed him the pen, the cashier happened to look up, and there was Bunder Poot Singh standing out in the garden gazing through the window.

He had seen the entire transaction.

He left the window and came to the door, which he opened without knocking, while McGann swept the notes hurriedly into the drawer of the desk.

"Pardon me," said Bunder Poot, "but am I in the way? Are you gentlemen having a private conference? No? Well, I should have knocked, but I thought you were alone, Judge McGann, and I was very anxious to see you."

"I will go," said Hamilton.

"No, no," exclaimed Bunder, putting up his hand. "It is not a secret matter. I wanted to know if you would take a partner in your invention, judge? I have a wealthy friend in London who gave me instructions to look out for any good thing that I could find among you wonderful Americans in the way of a new machine;

and I am convinced that he would wish me to buy some of the rights in this remarkable device if he knew about it as I do."

"I am very sorry," answered Judge McGann, "but I can't give you the opportunity at present. The machine is not perfected, and until I have it in complete running order I should prefer not to have partners."

The inventor diverged a little way from the straight line of veracity, for he remembered his promise not to mention Hamilton's connection with the enterprise.

"Ah!" said the Indian, "no doubt you are right. Of course, perfectly right! The machine must be complete before you will sell. That is the proper way to do. But, when you are ready to sell, you will let my London friend know—will you not?"

"I will see about it," said McGann.

"I understand," said the Indian to Hamilton; "this wise and great man with the marvellous mind wants to keep it and make all the money for himself. That is what he is planning to do."

"Perhaps so," said Hamilton.

"And if he should wish to sell part of his rights, he would probably prefer to favour his friends in his own town! Well, no one can blame him. It is fair. It is right. And he will have no trouble, I am sure, to find plenty of investors here in Turley. Will you let me see the motor go once more, judge?"

The inventor turned the switch, and the machine began to move in the most beautiful manner.

"Wonderful, wonderful!" exclaimed Bunder, throwing up both his hands. "Ah! You are a great people, an astonishing people!"

Then he said good-bye and took his leave, and as he passed the window he looked around and into the room again.

"I wish that man hadn't come in just at that moment," said Hamilton.

"He saw nothing," said McGann.

"I hope not," was the reply of the cashier, but he feared, also.

CHAPTER XXII

THE COBRA STRIKES

Two days after his visit to the workshop of Judge McGann, Bunder Poot called at the house of John Hamilton to spend an hour with him, in response to an invitation more than once given to the distinguished visitor by both Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton. Very unfortunately Mrs. Hamilton upon this evening was ill and unable to leave her room, and Dorothea was compelled to go out soon after Bunder Poot came in, because she had engaged to practise with the choir at the church.

And thus Hamilton and the prince had a good chance to smoke and talk as they would; and the host was not displeased, for he found the Indian good company. Bunder had seen much of the world, as may be supposed; and while it was agreeable to hear him talk of the people whom he had met in Europe, and of his wonderful adventures upon that and other continents, after all, he was most interesting when he spoke of his own land, his own people, and his own life, amid conditions differing so much from those with which Hamilton was familiar.

Hamilton could not help remarking, more than once, as his guest in his animated speech seemed to lose all self-consciousness, how handsome he was, what elegance distinguished his manner, and how his speech was warmed by the eloquence that shone even in his private conversation.

As Hamilton heard him talk, and talked with him,

the mind of the cashier was diverted from the serious offence that he had committed, memory of which was ever present with him; and he actually felt grateful to Bunder Poot that he had come to see him, and to give him entertainment of a character so delightful.

It was plain enough, the cashier thought, that the Indian had made no observations at the studio when he looked through the window. There was nothing in his manner or his look to indicate that he had the smallest suspicion of the transaction in which Judge McGann and Hamilton were engaged.

Bunder Poot appeared to like to speak upon topics relating to religion; and, as the evening wore on, he said to Hamilton:

"How much I admire that Lord's Prayer! So simple, so full, so beautiful! But there is one petition contained in this admirable prayer which I have never been able quite to understand."

"What is that?"

"We entreat our Maker, 'Lead us not into temptation.' This seems strange to me. If I rightly comprehend the conception of the Creator which has been formed, or rather, one may say, the nature of the revelation of Himself that He has given to His poor children, it would seem to be quite impossible that He should engage in such an act as leading them into temptation which might open the door to sinful action. Leading into temptation is the same thing as tempting, and it must be difficult to believe that our Father will lay traps for us; that He will draw us along the way in which are pit-falls into which we may tumble. But, if He cannot from His nature do this, why shall we pray that He will not do it? This is puzzling to a mind like mine, not long disciplined in the true faith."

"I think," said Hamilton, "I can help you a little there. We get the Lord's Prayer in the form of a translation. I do not know the precise wording of the original Greek, but I have always thought that the meaning of the line to which you refer, might perhaps be more accurately expressed if we should put the petition into

this shape: 'Suffer us not, or permit us not, to be led into temptation.'"

"Yes, yes, I see!"

"The idea being, not that our Father may actively urge us towards temptation, but that, temptation being probably in our way, He will interpose to restrain us from going towards it."

"That is, of course, that we may have the help of Divine Power in our effort to avoid or escape temptation?"

"Precisely. Many a man has not sinned certain sins because he has had no temptation of that particular kind. Now in this prayer we ask that we shall be delivered, as far as may be possible, from temptations of every kind."

"It is really beautiful when that sense is put upon it. But how strange it is that we are not protected from temptation when there is certainty we shall fall; or suppose I say that I have often been worried to reconcile the idea of the Father's love for us, with the fact that he does permit men to be tempted where they are weakest."

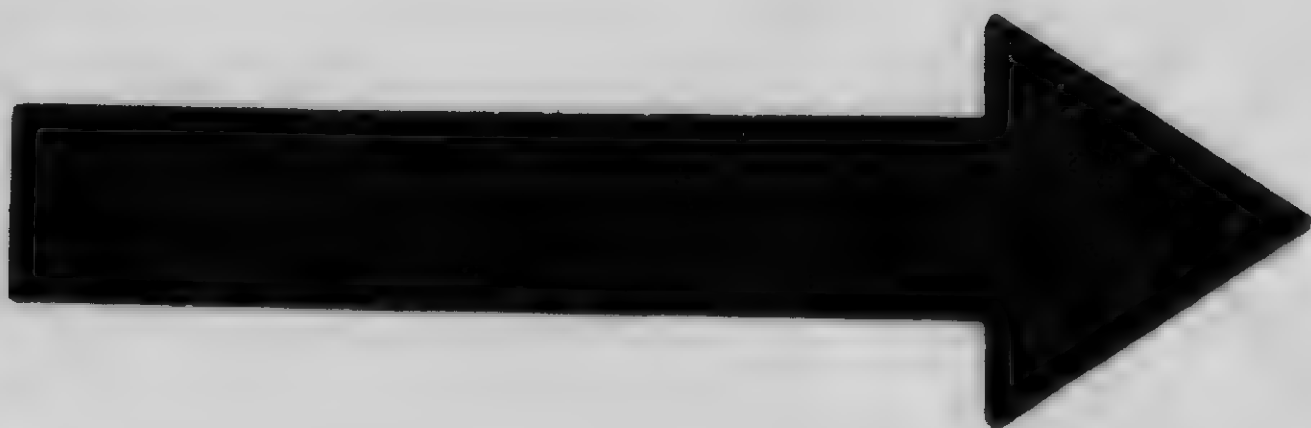
The cashier's mind had a flash of anguish in it, as he thought of his failure to resist temptation. But he answered:

"Well, many of these things are deep mysteries which will not be solved in this world. It is, however, easy enough, I think, to perceive that resistance to temptation makes a man's moral nature stronger."

"Yes," said the prince, "and so long as a man is a free agent, and there are right and wrong, he must have power to choose whether he will accept right or wrong."

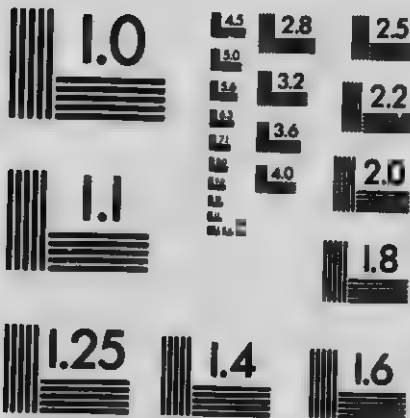
"Of course. Were there no temptations to pursue an evil course—were men simply compelled to follow the way of righteousness, there could be no spiritual growth at all."

"I am so glad that I spoke to you about this matter," said the prince. "It has distressed me much, and your explanation does not a little to give me more comfortable



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feelings. Your kindness encourages me to speak to you about another matter of rather trifling importance, which has given me some uneasiness. Not a great deal, for the way out of it is within plain sight in the early future, but momentary uneasiness. I have made great sacrifices for my degraded countrymen who are so dear to my heart, but I do it with joyfulness, feeling that the cause is a holy one and realizing, as I trust I do, in the largest degree, the fact that sacrifice is, if I may employ the expression, the root-principle of our faith. But a man's actual needs must be supplied. My estates in India will much more than supply mine, so narrow and simple—the surplus I throw into this splendid cause—but there must have been a delay of a steamer, for my agent at home has not made a remittance I seriously require. I hate to ask it, but could you conveniently lend me ten dollars until, say, Wednesday?"

This seemed to Hamilton an odd conclusion of his effort to remove from his visitor's mind a difficulty about the Lord's Prayer. For the first time the thought occurred to him that perhaps the prince was not a trustworthy man. He made up his mind that he would not lend the money.

"I am indeed sorry," he said, "very, very sorry, but you know I am a man of quite moderate income. I hardly see how I can meet your wishes."

"Only until Wednesday," said the prince with much suavity.

"I fear I must ask you to excuse me. My salary is not due for two weeks to come, and I have hardly enough money in the house to meet my ordinary expenses. Have you tried Dr. Frobisher?"

"Let me have twenty dollars then," said the prince in a gentle voice, ignoring the reference to the clergyman. Hamilton looked at him sharply, but at once leaped to the conclusion that his visitor had not understood him.

"I said I could *not* conveniently lend you ten dollars. Now you ask me for twenty."

"You will lend me fifty, won't you?" asked the prince

as tenderly as if he were wooing a willing but rather stubborn woman.

The blood came into Hamilton's face:

"No, sir, I won't; fifty nor ten! I do not understand your conduct, sir!"

The prince looked at the floor. He seemed hurt. There were no signs of anger. For a moment there was silence. Then, turning his eyes upon Hamilton, he said:

"Yes, you will."

Hamilton was scared. The flush upon his face was displaced by pallor.

"No, I won't!" he said desperately.

The prince did not at once reply. He gazed at the picture over the fire-place. He slowly crossed his legs. He seized the ivory paper-knife upon the table and toyed with it. Then he said:

"How is McGann's electric motor going to turn out, do you think?"

Hamilton's face went ghastly white. His lips trembled. He thought he should swoon. Like flashes of lightning there passed through his mind all the possibilities of possession of his secret by this man, suddenly become terrible. He could not for the moment command himself to answer. The prince saved him the effort.

"Oh, come now, Hamilton," said Bunder Poot, resting an elbow upon the table, and twirling the paper-knife round and round with his fingers, as he smiled pleasantly at his victim. "I know all about it, and there's no harm done. Don't look so scared, man! I've been in that kind of thing myself. That motor is a success. You've bought into a gold mine. If my remittances should come I'd buy you out in a minute, at a premium, too. I like your nerve and your foresight. You'll die rich. How much have you in the motor?"

Hamilton did not reply.

The prince appeared not to notice his silence. Looking again at the picture over the mantel, he continued:

"But a man who is going to be as rich as you are, ought to help his friends when they are in trouble. I

was never mean in that direction myself. You gave me enormous comfort, a while ago, about that odd line in the Lord's Prayer ; now I want you to lift me over this little money difficulty."

"I can't do it," said Hamilton.

"I don't want very much," said the prince, as if he had not heard him. "Give me a thousand dollars to-morrow night, at seven o'clock, at your front door, and that will do for the present," and the prince smiled upon Hamilton as if he loved him.

"A thousand dollars! No! No! not that," said Hamilton, almost with a sob.

"It grieves me to distress you," said the prince, with an air of soft affection, "but, really, I must have it. I should dislike more than I can tell you to have to go from your doorstep to-morrow night to call upon the president of the bank."

"Give me time to think," implored Hamilton, "and I will see what I can do."

"Yes, of course ; time to think ; you will need that. I shall be most sorry to press you. Take time to think ; but have the money in your hand when I come to your door, at seven o'clock precisely."

At that moment Dorothea entered the house and came into the room where her father sat with Bunder.

The Indian rose to greet her, gracious and courteous, as he always was. The girl saw that something was the matter with her father, and for an instant she was startled. Then she remembered that he had looked strangely more than once of late, and she felt reassured when Bunder said to her :

"I have been giving Mr. Hamilton some account of my life in India. He was most kind and sympathetic. It is much to me, Miss Hamilton, an exile from my home, to have found so many dear Christian friends."

"I am sorry," said Dorothea, "that my mother is unable to see you."

"Ah! how much I regret it! How much I should like to meet her again. Believe me, one of the charms that religion has for me, is that it produces these lovely



"The girl saw that something was the matter with her father."
Captain Blunt

[Page 336]

Christian households, where all is peace and affection and sympathy."

Bunder must take his leave. He bade good-bye to Miss Hamilton, looking at her, the father noticed, in a way that seemed to poor Hamilton to have all evil in it; then he went to the outer door, and shaking Hamilton's hand with almost affectionate heartiness, he said, in an undertone :

"At seven, precisely."

"You do not seem well, dear father," said Dorry when he returned to the room. She put her hand upon his shoulder.

"Yes, I am perfectly well."

"Is anything worrying you, father?"

"No, my dear. Why do you ask that?"

"You have not seemed quite like yourself lately. Mother has noticed it too."

"Mother! noticed it?"

He could hardly control himself while he spoke to her.

"Father," she said, "something is the matter! Did the Indian say or do anything that offended you?"

"Not at all, my child! Not at all. Of course not. I am quite well; only tired; and there were some worrying things at the bank to-day. Now go to bed, my dear, and to sleep. You need not have a thought about me. It is all right."

He kissed her and bade her good-night, and she went up-stairs with fear in her heart. She was not satisfied with the answers her father had given her.

As she left the room, Hamilton almost fell into the great arm-chair in front of the fire-place, where the fire still flickered among the bits of wood.

There was silence, upon the street, in the house, in the room. The clock upon the mantel seemed to tick thrice louder than usual. Sitting there, alone for the first time since this appalling revelation had been made to him, Hamilton tried to steady his mind that he might examine the situation. His senses were confused. His brain seemed to be actually whirling around. He must

try to grasp at some one point in the matter to which he could hold with firmness, so that he might consider with reason and sound judgment his line of action. This was difficult, so suddenly had the frightful position in which he was placed been revealed to him. But at last, by a violent effort of his will, he controlled his panic fear and managed to look the matter directly in the face.

It became apparent to him, as he reflected, that one of four courses was open to him. He could murder Bunder Poot; he could commit suicide; he could run away; or he could give the money to the Hindu.

His mind cleared as these alternatives presented themselves to him. Actually, as he sat there in complete obliviousness of everything about him, it seemed to him that he could look inward upon his intellectual apparatus and perceive with perfect distinctness these four propositions ranging themselves in a kind of regular order. One of these things he must do.

Then, as he looked, his mind suddenly swirled off again into a kind of convulsion, and, oddly, the words came rushing in upon it, as if a sluice-way had opened somewhere: "The way of transgressors is hard."

He laughed in a dreadful manner, as he remembered that he had once, less than a year ago, made this text the subject of a lesson for his Bible class. He felt a strong impulse to seek for the little written outline of that lesson, that he might recall just what his teaching had been.

He leaped from his chair, opened a desk, and began to hunt for the lesson-paper with as much eagerness as if he had forgotten Bunder Poot and his trouble, and as if success in the search would bring him some kind of solace. He found the paper, and sat down with feelings of curiosity to examine it. The argument at once seemed perfectly familiar to him. He recalled the whole of it at a glance.

(1) Sin is likely to have no repulsive features until it has been committed. (2) Action is sowing; and reaping inevitably follows sowing. Evil action produces evil

consequences. (3) Evil action is done in defiance of God's law, which is supreme, and the doer of evil, working against God and the moral law, must suffer. This was all true, but how much more impressive could the lesson be made now.

Then the thought flashed through his mind, as if some missile had crashed into his brain, that he should have to teach that Bible class next Sunday; and this blow, under which his mind reeled, was followed swiftly by another—next Sunday was communion Sunday; how could he hold himself up to go through with that ceremony?

Again his senses became half-confused. But he tore up the lesson-paper, flung it into the fire-place, and fell backward into the chair. Grasping the arms of the chair with rigid fingers, he drew himself into a sitting posture, and again forced his mind to resume orderly action.

Murder, suicide, flight, or another theft! There they stood: the four kinds of action from which he must make his choice.

Consider flight first, because that is the least dreadful to look at. He might steal a huge sum and take it with him. For one thing, he felt perfectly certain that flight, followed as it must be by disclosure of his crime, would kill his wife. So flight, upon the second glance, seemed to involve murder also, and murder of one whom he loved as much as a man can ever love a woman. Flight, if there be no return, meant that he should never see her again, even if she should live. That thought could not be endured either. But all men who have run away, under such conditions, have been brought back again. He would be caught, tried, and imprisoned; and his wife dead! And Dorry! He had not thought of Dorothea! She would be covered with shame, her life would be spoiled, and the girl would hate her father—Dorry, of whom he was so proud and whom he loved so much. His memory then ran swiftly back to the time when the child was just coming out of infancy, and to the joy the father had had in that very room, sitting in

that very chair, playing with her. The horrors that lay in the choice of flight could not be endured even in contemplation. No; he turned away from that.

Murder? He would not give that any consideration. Detection would be certain; but he knew, from what he suffered now, that he could not live with such a crime upon his soul. He would put the thought of murder aside, lest the temptation should grow upon him and overmaster him. He even feared to let go the control he now held upon his thought, lest some Satanic power should sweep him away into a wild frenzy, in which he would be irresistibly driven to bloodshed. No! Whatever else he should do, not murder!

Suicide? That was so easy; that was the short way out. His mind began to track the way down the street to the river; only a few hundred yards. He could end it all in ten minutes. And there was a quick method, right here in his own house. If he lived there could be nothing ahead of him but gloom, disgrace, and sorrow. Yes, in that very Bible lesson he had just recalled, one of his greatest points was that a deed once done was forever done. There can be no retreat. Why had he not considered that when he took the money from the bank? It seemed to him, now, strange that he should ever have discovered any force in the temptation to take it. But the thing was done, and the consequences lay directly before him, the consequences now become so dreadful; and a plunge into the river would end it all. He thought he could almost hear the swash of the water against the steamboat-pier at the end of the street. Dead within ten minutes!

But what then? Here was the old question, old as the weary heart and tired soul of man; old as life itself. He dared not face that question now. He believed the truths of religion. He had often tried to be a Christian. He had really thought himself a follower of Christ. That hope in his heart was even now not dead. For him, wicked as he was, even for him, there might be in some far-off day, in some far-off world, forgiveness. The tears flooded his lids as the thought came to him. But suicide

would close that door for ever. To die by his own sin ; to sin in the very act of dying—no ; mercy could not reach the soul so stained. Besides, what would his wife and his girl think of suicide ?

There was but one alternative. It was no harder to take one thousand than to take five thousand. One thousand more would not matter very much. And then (he actually had a feeling of exultant happiness as the thought came to him), "McGann's device will succeed ; I shall be rich ; I can put it all back again, and no man but the Hindu will ever know it. When I put it back I can defy him." But, as he remembered that the earnings from the motor could not soon be gathered, he began suddenly to consider if he could not borrow the money already stolen, and repay the bank at once, and thus put the Hindu at defiance. He thought of Captain Bluitt, of Dr. Quelch, of three or four other men of means whom he knew, and then he reflected that it would be impossible to obtain so large an amount of money from any of these men without security, and he had no security to give.

To meet the demand of Bunder Poot seemed, then, the only way in which he could go. But this, he said to himself, is only the first demand. He will want more money, and more and more. Then his thought slipped off again, and as the smiling face of the Hindu came up before his imagination, he recalled all he had ever heard of the subtle villainy of the East ; of poisoners and magicians ; of the genii of the *Arabian Nights* ; of charmed serpents and hidden religious rites ; of things mysterious and terrible ; and it seemed to him that it must have been some awful spiritual power of evil—the Prince of the Power of the Air—that had shot down this being from the dreadful Orient into the little American town, and infused its prosy and commonplace life with the very atmosphere of Hell.

As he sat before the dying fire, considering the matter, the thought suddenly came to him : "Why not give to the Indian to-morrow night the eight hundred dollars held in trust for Saul Tarsel ?" That sum

would not meet the whole of the demand made by Bunder, but it might satisfy him for a time, and meanwhile, perhaps, some plan may be devised for defeating any further attempts to extort money.

"Saul does not need the trust fund at once. No harm will be done to him by using it. Repayment can be made at any moment. Yes, to give the negro's money to that devil from the East—that is the road to safety, for the present, at least."

And so Hamilton went to bed, weary, wretched, forlorn; to sleep, but to wake again and again in the night to greet the horror that had come into his life, and which seemed even more dreadful in the silent and lonely hours than it had done when, first it was presented to him.

Bunder Poot Singh came to the door while the town clock was striking seven, and John Hamilton had his hand upon the latch, so that he might be the first to greet the unwelcome visitor. He thrust the notes upon Bunder Poot, and whispered:

"There are eight hundred. I could not get more to-day. Take eight hundred and be satisfied."

The Indian laughed quietly.

"Satisfied? Yes, for to-night. But I shall want one thousand more one week from to-night. Have it here, or take the consequences."

The sweat stood upon Hamilton's forehead as he closed the door. He tarried for a moment in the hall that he might compose himself.

"Who was it, father?" asked Dorothea, as he returned to the library.

"Only a beggar," he said.

It was part of the arrangement made by Destiny that John Hamilton should not make a second payment to the man from India.

CHAPTER XXIII

SUFFERING AND BLISS

CAPTAIN BLUITT returned to his home in Turley at the end of the week, in which Bunder Poot Singh had succeeded in getting complete mastery of John Hamilton. The captain had not yet seen the Indian, but he had heard much about him from Mrs. Burns's letters, and from Miss Puella, who had more to tell of the eloquence of the visitor, of his personal graces, and of his astonishing popularity, when she had greeted her brother and welcomed him to his own house. Captain Bluit's curiosity was awakened, but his interest, after all, was not very great, and he would not seek to encounter the distinguished visitor. Bunder Poot would make a long-promised address in the Presbyterian church on the following Tuesday evening, and Captain Bluit thought to attend the meeting and to enjoy the oratory that had earned so large a measure of praise.

On Saturday morning Captain Bluit walked about his grounds to observe if Rufus, amid the excitements of the political campaign, had been attentive to his duties at home. Coming to the stable in search of Rufus, he found Saul Tarsel engaged in caring for the horses, while Rufus was nowhere about. The captain at first was angry, for he jumped at the conclusion that his hired man had already found politics more interesting and important than his ordinary wage-earning work.

"Is that you, Saul? Where is Rufus?" asked the captain.

"Good-mawnin', Mars. Bluitt. Rufus, suh? Rufus, he's done tuk sick. Rufus has de hyderphobia."

"The hyderphobia? Rufus? Nonsense, Saul!"

"Dat's de werry gospel truf, Mars. Bluitt. Dish yer dog of Mars. Robinson done bit a piece outen him."

"When did this happen, Saul?" asked the captain.

"Yesterday, suh. In de evenin'."

"Did he send for the doctor?"

"Not fo' Dokter Quelch, suh. I done 'dvice Miss Pottah to send fo' Ephr'm Slocum."

"What does Ephraim know about hyderphobia?"

"I dunno, Mars. Bluitt, dat he's close acquainted wid de hyderphobia; but he's jes good at pow-wowin' any o' dem miseries."

"Pow-wowin'! You don't believe in that kind of thing, Saul, do you?"

"Yes, suh, mos' sholy. None o' dese white positions 'round yer like Dokter Quelch, 'ebber did me no good fo' my rheumatiz. Dey ain' no med'cine fo' dat misery. When I has de pain I sen' fo' Ephr'm, an' he pow-wows it. He does white-washin' too. I doan' 'mire his white-washin', but he's sholy got de inside holt on pow-wowin'. La' Chewsday two weeks, when I was a-layin' doubled up with the rheumatiz, so's I couldn' git offen de flo', Ephr'm come 'roun' an' done de pow-wow, an' de nex' mawnin' I'se jes as limber as an eel."

"What did he do?"

"I dunno, Marse; jes kep' a wavin' his han's ober de place an' sayin' conjurin' words. I dunno 'em; jes conjurin', unner his bref. De wavin' o' de han's won't do it widout de conjurin', an' mebbe de conjurin' won't do it widout de han's. Ephr'm's got it right. It's a gif. Sperits in it, I spec's. Some mons'ous cur'ous tings in dish yer worl', Mars. Bluitt!"

"Maybe it was the devil?"

"'Pears to me, Mars. Bluitt, when I has de misery bad dat de debbil has sumpin' to do wid dat. Ain' come from hebbin, sholy. Werry well, den, ef it's de debbil dat comes 'long o' Ephr'm to tek 'way he's own rheumatiz, I ain't got no quarrel wid him; and ef it's de

good sperits that 'nables Ephr'm to drive de debbil out, what's de use o' 'fusin' to let him? Anyways, Mars. Bluitt, you beat de debbil at his own game. I'se a 'ligious man, but when I'se full o' misery, I'se gwine to 'cept de fus position dat'll come 'long an' cure me, wedder he has a tail to wag or wings to flap. Dat's de way I'se a feelin'."

Captain Bluitt walked over to the house where Rufus lived. Mrs. Potter was up-stairs waiting upon the sick man.

"Run up and tell your mother that I want to see her," said the captain to one of the children.

Mrs. Potter came down with her apron to her eyes, which were red with crying.

"What is the matter, Hannah?" asked the captain.

"Oh, dear good Cap'n Bluitt, terrible things are the matter. I am so glad you have come that loves Rufus so dearly, and has done so much for us all. And to think, Cap'n Bluitt, that that good and faithful Rufus, who never hurt a worm, and was so kind and loving, and had just started out upon a career in public life, which as like as not would have led upward to glory, and to the unspeakable advantage of our country, should have been bit by a savage dog and hurled into madness, which will wreck his whole career of usefulness, unless the horrible delirium from which he suffers can be at an early moment abated."

"Bitten by a dog, was he?"

"By a furious, savage dog, wild with the ferocity of madness; bitten by that merciless animal; bitten in the leg; bitten and torn."

"How did this happen?"

"Why, only last night Rufus was tranquilly returning home from the first meeting of the new School Board, where he had gone in response to the call of duty, and where as time rolled by, and he stood firm at the post in which his appreciative fellow-citizens had placed him that he might guide the feet of the children in the ways of learning, he had been appointed by the caucus to membership on the committee on Advanced Education.

He had just reached Mr. Robinson's gate when this desperate wild animal rushed out at him, without the slightest provocation, animated by an insatiable thirst for blood."

"Did Rufus run?"

"Not at first, Cap'n Bluitt, because it is not in the nature of Rufus to fly from deadly peril, and now that he has been advanced to high official station, both of us felt that it would not be becoming for him to show craven fear in such an emergency as this. As soon, therefore, as the wild beast dashed towards him, Rufus boldly stood his ground and strenuously endeavoured to hold the animal with his eye; but either it was too dark, or the infuriated dog was blind with rage, or something or other, I know not what, for the maddened brute would not be stayed by Rufus's gaze; and when Rufus perceived this, and seen that no human power could check the onset of the dog, Rufus very properly, we all think, and without in any degree sacrificing his official dignity, endeavoured to scale our fence, whereupon the beast leaped upon him and buried its poisonous fangs deep in his leg."

"How do you know that the dog is mad?"

"Know it, Cap'n Bluitt? How do we know it? We know it by many and various signs and tokens, which infallibly prove that the dog is raging, tearing crazy. When Rufus first got into the house after this hideous catastrophe, he did not seem to be injured in an alarming manner. He bore himself like a hero, as he always does, though he could with difficulty restrain a tear. I tore his garments from his leg and staunched the blood, and bound the mutilated limb, and put him to bed, and all through the long and weary hours of the night he slept peacefully as a little child. But this very morning, while I was pouring water into the wash-basin when I first got up, Rufus awakened and said to me, 'Is that water, Han?' 'Yes,' I said; whereupon he fell into convulsions, and began to bark and bark and bark in a manner that excited consternation in my bosom, and in those of our dear children."

"Well?"

"Well, then, Cap'n Bluitt, I started for the doctor, when I met Saul Tarsel, and he advised me to seek for Ephraim Slocum to come to pow-wow Rufus, because the negro said pow-wowing is always better than doctoring, and as I was wild with distraction I didn't know what else to do, though I am not a perfectly firm believer in this mysterious method of dealing with disease, because it seems to me to contain elements of wickedness, and how an ignorant black person like old Slocum can reach the seat of the dreadful malady by conjuring and waving his hands is completely beyond my reach."

At that moment sounds resembling the barking of a dog came down from the room above, with the noise of shuffling feet.

"Hear that, Cap'n Bluitt? That's Rufus! He's been manifesting these heart-rending symptoms for three or four hours, and Ephraim is up there now pow-wowing him, and four of Rufus's colleagues on the School Board are holding him down with firmness and the exercise of mere muscular strength, lest in the fury of his convulsions he should leap to destruction through the window nearest the bed."

"Tell Saul I want him," said Captain Bluitt.

"Saul," said the captain to the negro, when he appeared, "saddle a horse and ride over quickly to Dr. Quelch's and tell him to come here. Now, Hannah, let's see the sick man."

When Captain Bluitt entered the room where Rufus lay, he saw the sick man extended upon the bed with his face upward, while each outstretched limb was held by a man who anxiously watched the countenance of the sufferer so that the next paroxysm might be prepared for. Upon the further side of the bed stood an aged negro, with a bald head fringed with white wool, and with heavy brass-rimmed spectacles lifted from his nose to the top of his wrinkled forehead.

The negro had his eyes closed and his face turned slightly upward; and while he waved his hands to and fro, and crossed them, and touched his thumbs, he

muttered strange words which none of his hearers could understand. It was plain enough that Ephraim Slocum was in earnest, and that if indeed all the resources of the science of pow-wowing were at his command, and if pow-wowing would indeed overcome the malignant forces of hydrophobia, the recovery of Rufus might be looked for with cheerful confidence.

"He is tranquil now," said Hannah, in a whisper to Captain Bluitt; "but no human foresight can tell at what moment he may break out again. The sight or sound of water impels him to become a mere maniac."

Captain Bluitt looked at the sick man, and the helpers, and the pow-wower, for a moment; then, stepping over to the washstand, he poured out some water. When Rufus heard it, he began to writhe and jump, and to bark, and to gnash his teeth in the most alarming manner.

"Singular, very singular indeed," said the captain, as he observed the performance. "I have often heard of water having that effect, but I never believed it."

He turned to go down-stairs, and Mrs. Potter followed him.

"I will wait here for Dr. Quelch, Hannah. I am really anxious about Rufus."

"Oh, Cap'n Bluitt," said Mrs. Potter, "do you truly believe that his life is in peril, and that a cruel fate will tear him from the arms of his wife and loving children, and from his new sphere of usefulness?"

"I can't tell," said the captain. "I never saw a case just like it before. Dr. Quelch will know."

"The trouble about Rufus," said Mrs. Potter, taking her seat upon the chair near to the staircase, and folding her hands upon her lap, "has always been his wonderful sensitiveness to impressions. He could never read about any form of disease in the medical advertisements in the papers, but he always thought he had it. Many's and many's the time he has said to me, 'Han, I feel queer here or I feel queer there,' and when I urged upon him to describe to me his symptoms, and soon afterwards I picked up the paper he had been reading, there was them very identical same symptoms in some horrid

patent medicine advertisement. There's bottles on bottles and literally no end of them in the cellar half-full of patent medicines upon which Rufus, who always means well, has squandered our substance under the vain illusion that his liver or his eyes or some portion of his system was assailed by perilous illness. It cost him four dollars and thirty-seven cents for medicines that he bought for astigmatism, which he misunderstood when he read about it was an affliction of some kind appertaining to the lungs, and he did not understand the truth that it is relating to the eyes until he had taken two bottles, and part of the third of the medicine, which was intended for asthma. I often told Rufus that it was foolish for him to be so strongly influenced by what the newspapers said, but he——"

Dr. Quelch interrupted Mrs. Potter's remarks by knocking upon the door.

When he was admitted, he greeted the captain and Mrs. Potter, and asked what was the matter.

Captain Bluitt thought he might be able to present the facts of the situation more succinctly than Mrs. Potter could, and he did so.

"Let us see the patient," said Dr. Quelch.

Dr. Quelch smiled as he entered the sick-room, and saw the four sympathetic and muscular members of the School Board with Ephraim Slocum muttering and waving his hands.

That the physician might see the case in its most alarming aspects, Captain Bluitt again poured out some water, and again the delegation from the School Board with difficulty restrained Rufus from plunging upon the floor.

Dr. Quelch went over to the bedside, and took hold of the wrist of the patient, while Ephraim suspended his incantations and looked out of the window.

"Is he very ill, doctor?" asked Captain Bluitt.

"Not very," responded the physician. "Mrs. Potter, have you a poker in the kitchen?"

The patient was now quiet. He heard the conversation.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Mrs. Potter, take that poker, and put it into the fire until it is as nearly as possible white-hot. Then have these gentlemen remove Rufus's clothes and turn him face downward upon the bed. Then, I should like to have Captain Bluitt take the heated point of the poker and start at the nape of Rufus's neck and draw it right along his back to the end of his spine. Bear on as hard as you can, captain. I will call to-morrow to see how the patient is."

Dr. Quelch went down-stairs with Captain Bluitt, who seemed anxious.

"Do you actually want me to burn the man's back, doctor?" asked the captain.

"Try it," answered the physician, smiling, "and see how it works. Captain Bluitt," he added, as he got into his buggy, "I have been practising medicine for nearly sixty years and never yet have I seen a case of hydrophobia."

The next morning Dr. Quelch drove up to Captain Bluitt's gate, hitched his horse, and walked around the house toward the home of Rufus. As he did so he saw the patient of yesterday busy with hammer and saw, repairing the trellis on which the grape vines were trained.

"How are you feeling this morning, Rufus?"

Rufus stopped work and looked around and said:

"I'm nearly well, I think, doctor. There is some little pain yet in yer," and he touched his forehead, "but mostly I'm feelin' good."

"The attack passed right off, did it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Without the burning with the poker?"

"Yes, sir; they didn't have to use it."

"What cured you, do you think?"

"Well now, Dr. Quelch, it would be ongracious for me to say so to you, mebbe, but do you know, doctor, I really believe old Slocum's pow-wowin' brought me to."

Dr. Quelch laughed and said good-bye, and drove off to visit another patient.

But Captain Bluitt's faith in incantations, rudely shaken by the complete failure of his own venture into the rites of haruspication, was completely overturned when he perceived in what manner the venerable Slocum conducted his ceremonies, and how the strong good sense of Dr. Quelch had won the victory with Rufus.

Captain Bluitt could not forbear, when he called that same evening upon Florabella Burns, to relate the circumstances connected with Rufus's attack of hydrophobia, and when the adorable Florabella laughed heartily as her visitor described the seer Ephraim's methods of conjuration, the captain's mind reverted to the experiment he himself had made in the wood-shed with the consecrated chicken, and he resolved to remind Puella, as soon as she should return home, positively to say nothing to Florabella or to anybody of his exploration of the mysteries of haruspication.

Mrs. Burns was in high spirits, and full of good talk, and she seemed really glad to have Captain Bluitt for a listener. He was a near neighbour, and he had been a good friend. He had managed much of her business for her during her absence, and had made some good investments for her when she had been at home; and Florabella, lonely and not practised in financial matters, had come to lean on him and to regard him as a wise counsellor.

There was now a new bond of sympathy for them in her love and pity for Dorothea Hamilton, and in his strong affection and admiration for Walter.

"You and I must do something, Captain Bluitt," she said, "to arrange this matter. Dorry is fairly pining away because she is separated from Walter, and no doubt he is heart-broken for her. How perfectly senseless it is for her father to keep them apart!"

"She could not have a better husband."

"No, and he will marry her sooner or later. Her father is giving her useless misery. I have a strong notion to advise them to run away."

"Run away where?"

"Why, *here*, if nowhere else. They can be married

in my house; and then he will have to forgive her; and that will be the end of it."

"I don't know," said the captain. "I don't much like that kind of a marriage, but, if the worst comes to the worst—if John Hamilton stays stupid and stubborn, maybe that will be the right way out of the difficulty. Have you heard from Walter lately?"

"Not a word; he knows that I have been away from home, and very likely thinks I have not returned. Dorry has heard nothing, either. I should think he would at least write to me, that I might carry some message to her. Do you know, Captain Bluit, that I have some suspicions?"

"Of whom?"

"I am half afraid to breathe them, for if they were unjust I should feel so mean; but——"

"You think maybe Walter has written to her?"

"Wouldn't you think so? Is it like him to stop even writing to her? He can't go to her house; but no letters!"

"He must have written, of course."

"Of course, and where are those letters? Dorry has never received them."

"You believe John has pocketed them?"

"Well, it is just horrid to think of such a thing; but letter after letter wouldn't go astray in the mail."

"And then Walter stopped writing because he got no answers?"

"Precisely; and the poor girl is foolish enough not to write first because her father said she shouldn't. I am going to write to Walter to ask him about it. You and I must look after these two creatures with the aching hearts."

Captain Bluit's countenance plainly indicated that a co-operative effort with Mrs. Burns would be far from displeasing to him.

"I'll write to him, too; or ask him to run down here to see us."

"Very well; and Dorry can meet him here, and a few tears and kisses will blot out the hideous past, and bring bliss back again."

Captain Bluit looked grave; but in fact his mind was strongly stimulated by this talk from the lips of the handsome Florabella about kisses and bliss.

"How pleasant it is, Mrs. Burns, to see two young people fondly attached to each other as they are and longing—literally longing, for each other's company?"

"Delightful."

"It always seemed to me," continued the captain, "that things are arranged beforehand, so that certain men and women are so created that mate is drawn to mate by some mysterious attraction."

"Many people think so," said Mrs. Burns reflectively.

"And I said to Walter, the very day he met Dorry Hamilton, that he would know his heart's delight the moment he saw her, and she would know him. The very day it happened. Singular, wasn't it?"

"Very. It is affinity—soul responding to soul. And yet," observed Florabella, "many persons are mistaken about it."

"Misfits!" said the captain. "I said so to Walter. But the reason is, they go off and get married in a hurry without waiting for the right one—the real mate—to come."

"That is just it," said Mrs. Burns.

"I determined long ago," remarked the captain, "never to make that mistake, and as no responsive soul ever met mine in my youth, I have waited long and patiently—not so very patiently, but as patiently as I could."

"Perhaps you will meet her yet," suggested Mrs. Burns, looking at the sofa-cushion, while her fingers played with the tassel.

"Ah, I hope so! I hope so!" said Captain Bluit, with half a sigh. "Do you know that when I saw Walter and Dorry go sailing off in my boat last summer, with a full cargo of love stowed in the craft, I couldn't help saying to myself:—'I wish I were in his place, or in such a place,' or words to that general effect."

"I was standing at the head of the steps when they returned to the landing, and I confess I could hardly avoid some feelings of envy," said Mrs. Burns.

Captain Bluitt glanced at her and coloured, and rose and pretended to adjust the window-blind, and coughed and resumed his seat.

"One of the most terrible things in the world for a man—I don't know of course how it is with a woman—is to be lonely. I have been lonely all my life, for the reason I have given you; and now I suppose no fine woman would consent to accept such a weather-beaten old hulk of a sailor as I am."

Mrs. Burns seemed reluctant to express an opinion of the reasonableness or unreasonableness of this conjecture; but Captain Bluitt thought he discerned in her countenance a trace of sympathetic feeling. He became bolder:

"But my heart is not weather-beaten," he said. "It yearns for affection: affection from a kindred soul; and I think I know where there is one. I think so. I may be mistaken, but I hope I'm not. I wish I could be certain it is yours, dear Florabella."

The colour came into Mrs. Burns's handsome face. She had guessed that the captain liked her, but she had not expected courtship so summary. Hesitating for a moment, she said:

"It is so difficult to be certain, but——"

"But you care for me, don't you?" asked the captain. "You are sure that you care for me a great deal?"

"I have always liked you very much, and you have been so kind to me," she said.

"'Like,' is such a cold word," remarked the captain. "I love you dearly, and I would be filled with joy if you could love me. Can't you do that?"

"I think I can," answered Mrs. Burns, shyly; but she looked at him and smiled.

Captain Bluitt took her hand.

"You can, and you will, and you do?" he asked.

"Yes," she said; "you are very dear to me."

"You will be my wife?" he inquired, tenderly, still holding her hand.

"Yes, I will."

"And may I kiss you?"

She did not answer him; but words were useless.

"I will go home a happy man," he said, "and I will make you happy too."

"We will be happy with each other," she answered.

Perfect bliss reigned. Then for a moment or two Captain Bluitt became thoughtful; and at last he said:

"What will you call me, Florabella?"

"You have some thought about it, dear?" she said.

"Well, Florabella, my first name you know is Elijah. Why on earth my parents, who were sensible people, ever fitted me out with such a name, I can't imagine. But there it is. Now, Elijah hardly lends itself to the language of endearment, and if you try to shorten it, say, to Lije, it is hideous. I can't imagine what you will do about it. I can't start life again with a new name."

"I'll call you 'dear,' or 'dearest,' or 'darling,' except when we are in company, and then I'll just call you captain."

Captain Bluitt thought this would be fine; and he kissed her again, and had a strong impression that he had never seen a much handsomer woman.

"I am so glad I came here to-night," he said. "I hadn't quite called up courage enough to speak to you, and I hardly thought I should do it; but we just sort of drifted into it. How fortunate it was!"

"Very," said Mrs. Burns.

"Yes, you and I will now go through life the rest of the way; *meum et tuum*, as the Romans always said: me and you."

"Hand in hand," said Florabella.

"And your initials will remain the same; B is for Bluitt, as well as for Burns."

Florabella laughed.

"I shall not have to re-mark my linen and my paper."

"Can't we be married when Walter and Daisy are married?" asked the captain.

"What a perfectly delightful idea!" exclaimed Mrs. Burns.

"And soon?" urged the captain.

"Whenever we can bring them together and arrange their wedding, I will be ready," answered Florabella. She was a woman who never failed in prompt action.

It is positively painful to turn from such a scene of unmixed felicity to another, which had been prepared by grim Fate, so that a loving heart might be wrung with anguish.

While ecstasy was finding its home in the front parlour of Florabella Burns, Lochinvar Frobisher began the journey homeward with Dorothea Hamilton, when the choir-rehearsal had ended. The young man had resolved that the time for him to speak had come, and in desperate disregard of the diminutive dimensions of his salary, and with some faint hope that larger revenue might drift in somehow or other from his mother's interests in the estates of the Metcalfs of Aramingo, he said to himself that he would avow his love upon that very night on the way from the church to the Hamilton house.

Dorothea would not take his proffered arm, as the pair left the church building, and that seemed discouraging; but Lochinvar had a manful purpose not to be discouraged.

"Dorry," he said, for he had known her long, "you and I have been thrown together a good deal, for several years, and have almost, as it were, grown up in each other's society."

"Yes," she said, and dread came into her soul.

"I always thought you liked me a little bit, and I am sure I have liked you ever since I knew you. But, Dorry, we are now man and woman, and I find I have another feeling for you. Dorry, I love you."

"Oh, no, no! do not say that!" she exclaimed almost with a sob, and she quickened her steps.

"Yes, but I must say it," he answered.

"Not now! Not now!" she implored him.

"I have no other opportunity. I know I should try to find a better one, but I can't. I love you. Is there any hope that you will love me?"

"No, no, it cannot be! Oh, do not say anything more! I am very, very unhappy!"

"It would give me deep pain to make you unhappy, but surely you will not refuse to answer me! I shall suffer anguish if you cannot return my love. I beg you to try to love me! I cannot offer you much. I am a poor man; but I will work and strive and suffer for you if you love me; and my family will stand by me and help me. Is there any hope?"

"No," she said. "I am most sorry, very, very sorry. I never dreamed that you cared for me. It is dreadful to give you pain. I can never care for you but as a friend."

"It is terrible to hear you say so," said the unhappy young man. "Perhaps after a while—perhaps the time will come when——?"

"It cannot be," she said. "Do not, oh, do not cherish any such hope! And now," she said as they came near to her home, "good-bye! You must never speak to me again upon this subject, and you must forgive me! I have grieved you. I did not wish to do so. Forgive me and good-bye."

He took her hand and kissed it, and she, entering the house, hurried up-stairs to her room and began again to weep, and to think of Walter and her own desolation.

CHAPTER XXIV

CAPTAIN BLUITT BEHAVES IN A SURPRISING MANNER

THE address made in the Presbyterian church by Bunder Poot Singh, when he first visited Turley, had given such fame to his eloquence, and curiosity about him, and interest in him, had now become so great, that the building was thronged on the Tuesday night when he was to speak again at length upon the subject of his mission.

Mrs. Frobisher had another delightful talk with him about India and his ancestors and his ancestral home after the early dinner that preceded the meeting, and, filled with the charm of his conversation, she took her place in the pastor's pew with two women-friends who had driven in from the country upon her invitation to hear the distinguished stranger.

Mrs. Frobisher nestled down at the farther end of the pew with a comfortable feeling that a minister's wife does indeed have some privileges; and she was conscious of a sense of superiority to the persons about her, who perhaps had met the prince at social gatherings, but who knew nothing of the delight of the prolonged and uninterrupted conversation in which the nobleman appeared to reveal his finer feelings.

She remembered with what emotion she had heard him speak in that church when first he appeared upon the platform, and she anticipated with keen pleasure another opportunity to enjoy his eloquence.

The church was really crowded. The pews and parts

of the aisles, and the spaces in the choir and about the organ, were filled. Dr. Frobisher, as he came from his study door upon the platform to find in the Bible upon the desk the chapter which he wished to read, felt as he glanced at the congregation that he would have much greater encouragement in his ministry if half so many people would come to the church, to worship and to hear him preach, on Sundays.

Returning to the study, the pastor in a moment came again upon the platform with the prince. Bunder Poot modestly, and almost with an appearance of shyness, sat upon one of the three chairs behind the desk or pulpit.

Surely he was a handsome man. His dress was rather sombre: brown stuff, with loose-flowing trousers, with a blue sash at the waist and a white turban, in which was no jewel. Mrs. Frobisher wondered why he had not worn the great ruby this evening, and she felt sorry for her friends from the country, to whom she had described the stone, and to whom now she whispered a word of regret.

The meeting began with a brief prayer by Dr. Frobisher, after which a hymn was sung, the congregation joining with the choir in the singing with so much vigour as to impart to the worthy minister another pang, as he thought of the coldness of the congregation with respect to the singing at the Sabbath services.

Then the pastor read a chapter from Isaiah, and closing the book, said:

"Will our brother now lead us in prayer?"

Bunder Poot rose and came forward to the edge of the platform and, resting his left hand upon the side of the pulpit, lifted his right hand as a signal for the congregation to bow their heads.

He began in a low voice, every note of which was musical, and full of solemnity.

Partly because of the strong entreaty of Puella, partly from curiosity, Captain Bluitt had consented to attend this meeting. But, just as he was ready to leave home, a visitor who came to see him on some small matter of

business, detained him for a few moments, and Puella had gone without him, promising to reserve for him a seat in his own pew.

The captain did not tarry for a long time, but when he reached the outer door of the church, just as Bunder Poot had begun to pray, the crowd in the vestibule was so dense that he found difficulty in pushing through it.

While he was engaged in finding his way to the inner door, he could hear the melodious voice of the Indian, and when he entered the room he saw the figure upon the platform; but the distance was too great, or the light was too dim, to permit him to discern the features of the man.

Captain Bluitt walked softly up the aisle, he alone of all the hundreds of persons present with his eyes wide open. The Indian himself had closed his eyes while he poured out his petition before the listeners, whose heads were bowed upon the backs of the pews.

As Captain Bluitt came nearer to the speaker, the captain suddenly was conscious that the face of the Indian was familiar to him. Before he could think about it, something like an electric shock ran through his nerves, and he stopped and put his hand upon the top of the pew beside him.

All about him women were sobbing, as the voice and the words of the speaker became more and more highly charged with feeling.

When Captain Bluitt stopped, Bunder Poot opened his eyes and saw him. The Indian half completed the sentence upon his lips; then he paused, stammered, looked about him for half a second, as if to discover the easiest way to escape, and then turned and fled through the doorway into the pastor's study.

"Hey there! Stop him! Seize him! Don't let him get away!" shouted Captain Bluitt.

And the captain dashed up to the end of the aisle, overturning two chairs, seriously threatening the equilibrium of Major Gridley, who sat upon another chair; leaping upon the platform, pushing by the astonished pastor, and disappearing through the study door.

Bunder Poot had lingered for a moment in the study for some unknown reason, but the captain's eagerness was so great that the Indian had no time to lose if he wished to get away, and so, as Captain Bluitt thrust himself into the room, Bunder Poot ran into the street and disappeared around the corner.

He was gone when the captain got into the open air, and, after looking into the darkness up and down the street, and hesitating whether it would be better or not to take up a hunt that promised to have no very successful result, Captain Bluitt entered the study, closed the outer door, and came again upon the platform.

Speechless amazement, mingled with feelings of indignation and strong curiosity—these are words that may convey some sort of notion of the sentiment of the congregation that now beheld Captain Bluitt, hot, red, and out of breath, with the front of his hair standing stiffly upward, and with a certain wild look in his eyes, returning from the pursuit of the nobleman who five minutes earlier was stirring with his affecting words the deepest religious emotions of that great mass of people.

Unused to the platform, and not having perfect command of himself, Captain Bluitt seemed to hesitate for a minute whether to descend upon the left-hand steps or the right-hand steps, or whether to jump down.

He had almost decided to jump, when Dr. Frobisher said:

"One moment, Captain Bluitt! It is positively necessary that you should explain to the congregation this extraordinary scene—this strange and shocking interruption of Divine worship. Do not forget that this is a sacred place. It appears to me that there has been profanation."

Captain Bluitt stopped and listened to the pastor.

"Do you want me to tell you the story right here?" he asked.

"Yes."

"I'm not much used to speaking in a public place like this, but I'll do the best I can."

"How perfectly vulgar!" whispered Mrs. Frobisher

to her friends. "That horrid man! What on earth can he have done to frighten that dear Indian gentleman?"

"Dr. Frobisher and friends," began Captain Bluit, clearing his throat and growing redder, "I needn't tell you how sorry I am to make such a disturbance. I hadn't the slightest notion of it when I came to the church, but that Indian's a tremendous rascal."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Frobisher.

"Worse than that," continued the captain, "he is a murderer and a thief!"

"I don't believe a word of it," said Mrs. Frobisher almost aloud, and with her face as red as Captain Bluit's. "It is scandalous to say such a thing."

"He is no prince at all," said the captain. "Prince! why he was the body-servant of a friend of mine, an Englishman, when I was in Calcutta ten years ago: a precious rascal!"

"You know this to be true?" asked Dr. Frobisher, who was almost overwhelmed by shame and disgust, and by the consciousness that he was largely responsible for giving Bunder Poot the opportunity to impose upon the people of Turley. Dr. Frobisher felt that he should be ill.

"Know it? Surely! I lived in the house of that man's master with that man. I was living there when he murdered his master!"

The congregation, keyed to the highest pitch of curiosity and excitement, uttered exclamations.

"Horrible!" said Dr. Frobisher, reaching for a chair, upon which he leaned.

"The villain recognized me at once. Why did he fly? The case proves itself. The sight of my face unnerved him; he knew that his game was up. His master's name was Thompson—William Parker Thompson; or maybe it was Barker, instead of Parker. But, anyhow, Thompson lived in the suburbs of Calcutta in a lovely house. He was rich, and he liked me and I liked him, and I went over to stay with him for a week or ten days, while my ship was unloading and refitting. He lived splendidly; and he had a Sepoy servant, one of the handsomest

young men I ever saw, and smart is no name for how smart he was. But I never liked the look of his eye. Thompson trusted him with everything, and used him sometimes as his secretary, for the boy wrote a beautiful hand and could imitate any handwriting that he ever saw. Thompson treated him more like a son than a servant, and I told him he ought to be more careful; but he laughed and said Randy would be willing to die for him, he loved his master so. He called the boy Randy, though his real name was Ranpojama, or some Indian name like that. Well, the last night I was to spend at Thompson's I went to bed as usual and was undisturbed; but the first thing in the morning there was a tremendous excitement; and no wonder! During the night Randy had gone to his master's room and strangled him in his bed. Then he had picked up all the ready-money that was in Thompson's desk, all the gold things and the silver things that he could carry, and all the jewels, including a magnificent ruby, the biggest and finest I ever saw, and he was gone! The police got after him, and big rewards were offered, and they searched the rolling earth for him, but he had wholly disappeared. And here he was to-night, praying—actually praying in our old Turley church—the rascal! Now, friends, that's the whole story. We will start another hunt for him, and if we catch him off he goes to India, and to the scaffold."

In the crowd that filled the church, the only person to whom the unmasking of Bunder Poot was not completely surprising, was John Hamilton.

He would have found difficulty, perhaps, in describing the feelings with which he regarded the exposure and swift flight of the impostor. There was much relief for him in the assurance that the rascal would never return. But then, Hamilton had now new light upon the desperate character of the man, and he felt at once apprehension that Bunder Poot would still endeavour to obtain new supplies of money from the cashier, or in pure malevolence would reveal to the bank officers the fact of Hamilton's defalcation.

And so whatever pleasure the cashier felt as he witnessed the discomfiture and disappearance of his enemy, was tempered with the warrantable fear that the terrible hold of the Indian upon him had not yet been shaken off.

As Hamilton came from the church door into the street, his wife, holding his arm more closely than was her custom, said to him, so soon as they had freed themselves from the crowd :

"Isn't it terrible, dear?"

She was almost ready to cry.

"Terrible, indeed," he answered, "that a man should commit such crimes."

"Oh, not so much the wicked things he did in India, though they were dreadful; but oh, John, how could the man be such a hypocrite?"

"It is inconceivable."

"To think of that creature, with blood on his hands and theft in his heart, posing as a devout Christian! Such lovely prayers too! Did you ever hear any one pray with greater apparent devotion than he did to-night?"

"Never."

"It is enough," continued Mrs. Hamilton, "to make one tremble for other people who pretend to be devout; indeed to tremble for oneself. How did he ever manage to make us all believe that he is a Christian man? Had you any doubt about him, dear?"

Hamilton hesitated a moment, and then said :

"No."

"Of course not, and yet you are so quick and accurate in judging men. Do you think he got much money here in Turley?"

"I really don't know," answered Hamilton.

"I'm afraid he collected several hundred dollars. I am so glad we gave him only a little. I am glad too that we never became so intimate with him as some of the people did. And he really seemed to fancy you too, dear, I thought."

"I hardly think he did," answered Hamilton. "He

only thought I could help him with his schemes, because I am somewhat prominent."

"Well, let us be thankful he is gone. Wasn't it fortunate that Captain Bluitt happened to know him? What would he not have done if he had not been recognized?"

"It was a lucky thing, indeed."

"And, John?"

"Well, my dear?"

She pressed his arm closer to her bosom.

"Oh, what an awful thing it is, dear, to get money by any crooked method! I would rather starve to death. How thankful I am that we do not have a dollar that does not honestly belong to us!"

Captain Bluitt, looking at the throng that filled the aisles and tarried to talk of the strange occurrences of the evening, decided to leave the church through the door opening from the pastor's study to the street.

Shaking hands with Dr. Frobisher and bidding him good-night, just as the minister passed from the platform to the pew to comfort Mrs. Frobisher, who was in tears, and not unlikely to become hysterical, Captain Bluitt withdrew from the church.

He walked slowly down the dark street, without thinking of or waiting for Puella, who lingered in the church, and with his thought fixed upon the scene in India of which he had just spoken to the congregation.

One or two persons passed him and spoke to him, almost without recognition on his part, and he might have covered the entire distance to his home without clear consciousness of surrounding objects when, chancing to lift his eyes as he turned the corner by Jones's drug-store, where the light in the window was thrown upon the side-walk, he saw the turbanned, loosely-clad form of the Hindu upon the other side of the street, moving in the direction opposite to that in which he himself was going.

Instantly the captain dashed across the street and seized the figure, shouting for help.

Holding the man fast and pulling him swiftly toward

the light, the captain in a moment found that he had seized Rufus Potter.

"It's me, Cap'n Bluitt, only me. Please don't pull so hard," said Rufus.

"Rufus," exclaimed the captain, "are you crazy? What are you doing in those clothes? Tell me quick."

"I'm a-goin' to tell you, cap'n. I was jes' a-huntin' you up to tell you. I was pushin' for the church."

"Well, out with it!"

A crowd of persons had gathered about the captain and Rufus, and it increased in dimensions every moment. All Turley knew by this time of the remarkable occurrence at the church.

"Why, you see," began Rufus, "I was jes' a-closin' up the stable this evenin' after fixin' it fer the night, and I hain't more'n got my hand on the door to shet it, than in jumps this yer Punder Boot, like a crazy man. He pushed me inside, slammed the door, drew a pistol, cocked it, and aimed it at me. 'Off with them there clothes, quick!' says he. 'Which clothes?' says I, pretty near skeered to death. I never suspicioned that the man was in earnest, onless he was crazy. 'Them there clothes you has on,' says he; 'quick, now, no foolin', off with 'em!' I had on my best Sunday suit, and I hated like pizin to let it go, but I skinned it off in a hurry, I tell you."

"Well?" said Captain Bluitt impatiently.

"'Now,' says he, as he took off his clothes and put mine on him (blame him, I say), 'you git out that there bay mare of Bluitt's and saddle her, quick!'"

"You didn't do it, did you?" asked the captain angrily.

"Cap'n Bluitt, it wan't no use a-hesitatin'. He'd a blowed my brains out before you could wink."

"No, he wouldn't," said the captain bitterly. "Nobody could do that. You can't blow out a vacuum."

"He said he would, and he looked it. I'm a man with a fambly, and I ain't got no room for takin' no chanches, so I put the saddle on the mare and led her out.

"'Open that there door,' says he, a-jumpin' into the

saddle. So I opened the door, and as he started down the street he hollered: 'Them injun clothes is yourn, Rufus. You can wear 'em at the School Board!' Then he kinder laughed, and the mare went off like a bullet out of a gun.

"So I never had no chanct fer nothin' but to put on his clothes, fer I couldn't walk around the town naked, now could I? I got into 'em and was a-hurryin' down the street to find you and to tell you. That's all there is. I've had a close shave to death, that's what I've had," and Rufus began to cry.

"Which way did the scoundrel go?" asked the captain.

"Down that way," answered Rufus, pointing with his hand, "out towards Dr. Quelch's. But you bet he ain't goin' to keep that road. He's goin' to shift around as soon as he gits out a-piece. He's as near a devil as any man I ever seen."

Captain Bluitt went over to the mayor's office and gave to the police all the facts in his possession, and a chase was begun, but without result.

Then the captain thought he would like to relate to Florabella the exciting adventures of the evening, and when she had heard of them, she said:

"I distrusted that man from the first."

"You are quick at reading character, aren't you?"

"I think I am," she said, and as Captain Bluitt held her soft white hand and looked at her lovely hair, he felt that the remark had in it something like a compliment for him.

CHAPTER XXV

FLIGHT

WHILE Turley on Wednesday morning was still blazing with the excitement created by the exposure and flight of the Hindu impostor upon the preceding evening, and while nearly all the Turley people outside of the Presbyterian church were thoroughly enjoying a sensational occurrence which supplied theme for much talk, and infused the dull life of the town with some elements of dramatic interest, another incident presented itself to give to Turley a still stronger shock.

When the morning papers from the great city came down to Turley, they contained the narrative of the flight of the teller of one of the city banks, after discovery of the fact that he had stolen a huge sum of money belonging to the institution. Under ordinary circumstances this narrative would have interested the people of the town not a little, but they had in the exposure of Bunder Poot a tragedy of their own that day which was to them of surpassing importance.

To one man, however, the news had mighty interest, and John Hamilton trembled as he read it. He did not believe that the crime in the city would in any manner involve him, but he could not escape the thought that the fate which had overtaken the defaulting teller might one day be his. He pondered the matter all day Wednesday while he was at the bank, and on Thursday morning he returned to his desk, not at ease or having confidence, but sure that no peril threatened him immediately.

It was therefore with feelings of consternation that he saw two strangers enter his room at the bank, with the president and two of the directors, and heard the president say:

"Mr. Hamilton, the board has determined to have the accounts of the bank completely overhauled by these gentlemen, official accountants. Of course we are perfectly confident that everything is right—there are no grounds for any kind of suspicion—but the feeling among the directors and stock-holders is that this work, which should have been done long ago, should be done now. Will you be so kind as to give these gentlemen access to everything, and to lend them help in the performance of their task?"

Then the president called Hamilton aside and whispered to him: "I want them particularly to look into the work of the receiving teller. Have you had any suspicions there, Hamilton?"

"No."

"I can't say exactly that I have, either. No, not suspicions. But let these men go right to the bottom of everything, and then suspicion will be unnecessary. Keep a sharp eye all day, will you, upon both tellers?"

For John Hamilton the day of doom had come, and he almost lost self-control in making the effort to maintain composure, while his mind cast about for some method of escaping from the frightful situation in which he had been suddenly placed.

He made a brave show of receiving the visitors with willing affability, and as he moved with them, showing them the various books, and pointing out the compartments in the vault in which securities and moneys were distributed, he talked cheerfully, and even praised the prudence of the bank in having such an examination made.

"No bank," he said, "should go along year after year doing business and taking for granted everything is right. You can't tell who is to be trusted in these days. If the board had taken my advice, it would have had the accounts overhauled once a year for ten years past."

Then when the accountants had actually settled down to their work in the president's room, the cashier returned to his own room and seized a precious moment for thought. That he must fly, and at once, was certain. At any moment some trace might be found of his theft, and he must go, if he were to go at all, while still he was unsuspected.

Go, but where? Strangely enough, he had never considered the possibility of flight, nor prepared for it in his mind. The last desperate emergency which had now thrust itself upon him without warning he had thought of, when he had ventured to think of it, as far off in a future which might indeed never come. But now he must act, and act without time to consider whither he should go or what he should do.

One reflection he had. There was no money in his pocket, and he could not fly without money. He walked into the vault, picked up a small bundle of notes, thrust them into his pocket, returned to his office, took up his hat, and walking by the window of the paying teller, said, "I will be back again in five minutes," and left the bank.

His first thought was to go home before he left the town, but this seemed to him inadvisable, for he could not bear to reveal the truth to the dear ones who would be startled by his appearance, and then, when the theft should be discovered, he would be sought for at his house.

His inclination was to take a train for the city, but there was no train before the afternoon, and that might be too late. He thought then of hiring a carriage and driving away, but that would permit the bank directors to know upon what road he had gone. Pursuit and arrest would be quick and sure. He could not walk swiftly enough to reach a place of safety before the officers of the law would look for him. Plainly he must hide somewhere until night, and then leave the town in a manner which would permit his movements to be hidden.

His mind was in such a state of excitement and dis-

traction that he could hardly frame a plan of action, and as he walked along, really fearing that he would be collared by a policeman before he could make a decision, he saw Saul Tarsel entering the front door of the Presbyterian church.

Hamilton looked about him. No other person was upon the street near to him, no eyes looked upon him from the neighbouring windows. He fairly ran towards the church and pushed through the doorway.

He closed the door behind him and locked it, while the negro turned and looked at him with surprise.

"Is dat you, Mars. Hamilton? Good-mawnin'."

"Saul, Saul!" exclaimed Hamilton, "come in here for a moment," and he led the way into the church, where he almost fell into one of the pews.

"Saul," he said, "I have always been kind to you, haven't I?"

"Yes, Mars. Hamilton."

"I've always treated you right. They would have turned you out of this place long ago, Saul, if I hadn't stood by you."

"You'se my fren, Mars. Hamilton, dat's certain."

"Yes, I have stood by you; and here, Saul, here's five dollars I want to give you," and he handed the negro the money.

"Much 'bleeged, Mars. Hamilton, but what's dat fur?"

"I'm in great trouble, Saul—I can't tell you all about it just now—great trouble, and I want you to promise not to tell anybody I'm here. Will you promise?"

"Co'se I will, Mars. John, sholy!"

"Swear that you will not tell; will you do that?"

"Yes, marster, I swear on de good Book ef you wants me to."

"Not a soul must know it, no matter who asks you, no matter what happens. You won't give me up, will you, Saul?"

"No, Mars. John, you'se safe yer, wid me."

"And I'll tell you what we'll do, Saul," continued the panic-stricken man, while the negro regarded him with pity and amazement. "You open the door to the tower,

and let me go up there, and then lock the door, and keep everybody out, and keep your tongue still, and then come to me about seven o'clock to-night. Bring me something to eat and some water. Will you do that?"

"Yes, marster."

"Don't let any one see you bringing the food and water to me. Do it after dark, and don't light the gas in the vestibule, and don't answer any questions if you are asked about me. And, Saul, here's another five dollars for you."

"I doan' wan' de money, Mars. John. I'll take care of you widout dat."

"Take it, take it," said Hamilton, forcing the note upon him. "I want to pay you for your trouble."

Then Saul led the way to the tower, and when Hamilton had reached the chamber below the belfry, Hamilton said:

"Bring me up two pew-cushions and a chair, Saul."

This having been done, Hamilton said:

"Now go down-stairs, lock the door, bring me food and water at seven o'clock, and I will give you further directions."

Saul slowly descended the stairs, fastened the door, and went towards the pastor's study, saying to himself:

"Ef de gemman ain' clean, stock crazy, den dey's sumpin gone wrong down yer at de bank!"

The absence of the cashier from the bank startled the president when it was reported to him, and when hour after hour passed by, and still Hamilton did not return, suspicion seemed to strengthen into certainty. A clerk went to his house to ask if he were there, and Mrs. Hamilton received the first of a series of shocks which were to bring anguish to her soul. Then rumour that something was wrong at the bank began to fly about the town, and before any definite information had been obtained by the accountants that the cashier had taken money from the institution, nearly all Turley had heard that John Hamilton was a defaulter and a fugitive.

Here then, right in the heart of the town, was a

tragedy that dwarfed in its proportions the drama that had been enacted in the church only two days before.

Long before the bank closed, the examiners, having learned where to look for wrong-doing, found the way to the path which the cashier had trod, and before night the total dimensions of the defalcation were known. A notice, signed by the president, was affixed to the door of the bank, giving the facts and the figures, and the assurance supplied by the examiners that the resources of the bank were not seriously impaired, and that it had assets far beyond its liabilities. These statements were received with confidence, and the depositors refrained from making any pressing demands upon the institution when it opened on Friday morning. The police authorities at once began to search for the fugitive, who, it was thought, had fled to the city.

Saul Tarsel kept his secret amid all the excitement, displaying really remarkable ingenuity in counterfeiting innocence of any knowledge of Hamilton's whereabouts, while every human being in the town discussed the subject to the abandonment of all other topics of conversation.

When evening came, the negro brought food from his own house to the church, and filling a pitcher with water in the pastor's study, he climbed in the darkness to the chamber where his prisoner lay, and ministered to him.

Hamilton questioned him to learn if the crime had been discovered, and eagerly listened while the sexton, half ashamed to tell all that he had heard, related some of the facts that had come into his possession.

"And you will still be faithful to me, Saul?" he said. "You will not desert me? You will help me, won't you?"

"Yes, marster, sholy."

"Let me tell you what to do. Go down to the foot of the next street, and see if Mr. Robinson's boat is lying there, as it nearly always is, and if the oars are in it. If it is there, will you row me across the river to Coantico to-night, Saul?"

"Hit's two good miles, Mars. John, but I'll do hit."

"Two miles, yes! But I'll pay you well for it, and you can bring the boat back, and it will be there all right in the morning, and nobody will know it. You will do that, won't you, Saul."

"Yes, Mars. John, I'll do dat, sho'."

"Very well, you go down there now, and leave me the keys of the church. Come back, and when you get on the pavement in front of the church, cough—have a fit of coughing—if the boat is there. Then go right back to the river and wait for me. I will find my way to you as quickly as I can."

The negro left him, and before ten o'clock struck the cashier heard the signal. At once he came down into the church, and feeling his way along the aisle, he unlocked the door leading to the side street, and slowly opening it, he peered out into the darkness. Nobody was near. Pulling his hat down over his eyes, he stepped upon the street, and walked swiftly in the gloom, through alley-ways and unfrequented streets, to the river.

Saul stood by the boat awaiting him, and almost joyfully the wretched criminal stepped in and took his seat, while the negro thrust the craft into deep water, and leaping in, placed the oars in position, and turned the prow towards the further shore.

The tide ran strongly, but the black was a powerful man and a good oarsman, and the boat went swiftly towards its destination.

"Saul," said the cashier, when Turley had been left far behind, "I must tell you how all this happened. It was Bunder Poot that got me into this terrible trouble."

"I kinder 'spicioned dat, Mars. John."

"Yes, Saul, he threatened me and scared me, and cheated me to get money, and I had to give it to him, Saul; I had to give it to him. I couldn't help myself."

"He was de debbil, dat man!"

"And Saul!"

"Yes, Mars. John."

"He took from me the eight hundred dollars belonging to you—took that from me, Saul!"

The negro uttered a cry of bitter anguish, and came near dropping the oars overboard.

"Not dat, Mars. John! Not dat! Dat money ain' done gone too?" And the old man began to sob.

"I'm very, very sorry, Saul. I did everything I could to protect you. But he had me by the throat. I was helpless. I had to give it to him, or he would have killed me."

"Oh, Mars. John," exclaimed the negro, rowing again, but with distinctly diminished energy, "dat snatches my wife and my liddle gal right from me! Dey's done gone forever! Oh, my wife, my Phœbe! I'll nebber see you again, nebber, nebber!"

"It is terrible, Saul, terrible, but what could I do? My wife and child are gone too. Gone, gone, gone! But perhaps, Saul, something will happen that I can pay you the money again, yes something. And, Saul, you won't be angry and betray me, will you?"

"No, marster, I say I woan', and I mean I woan'. But may de good Lord forgib you. It's werry, werry ha'd fo' de ol' man, an' his heart nigh a breckin', anyway."

When they came near to the shore, it was far on towards midnight, and Hamilton knew that there was a train away from the great city, bound southward, which stopped at Coantico at that hour. If he could reach it undetected he should feel safe. He did reach it.

As he stepped ashore he gave more money to the black man, and said to him:

"Saul, go to my house in the morning, and see Mrs. Hamilton, and tell her where you took me, and that I will try to find a way to write to her. But say nothing to any other person."

Then, as he turned away and walked towards the station, Saul Tarsel took up the oars, and with pain and rage and grief in his heart, began to row homeward.

The night was more than half gone when he reached Turley, but he felt that he could not go directly to the cabin where he lived. He walked over to the church, and opening the door he lighted a single burner, for he did not like to be alone there in the darkness. Then

with the dim shadows about him, with perfect silence outside in the street, and with his heart nigh to bursting with its sorrow, he ascended the platform, and going to the place where prayer was wont to be made, he flung himself down at full length, and with his forehead resting upon his wrists, he fell into a passion of weeping.

At first he could not find utterance, but in a few moments, when the storm had spent itself a little, he said :

"My Marster, I'se jes' a po' good-fo'-nuffin brack man ! Dey ain' no good in me ! But dey allus sez de mo wuffless a man is, an' de lower down he drap, de mo' yo' love him an' de funder yo' go to lif' him out. Come to me now, my Marster, an' gi' me hol' o' yer han' ! Oh, gi' my wife back to me ! I knows yo' feels fo' de sufferin', kase yo' suffered yo' own self ; and I'se one o' dem ! Dey ain' spit in my face lek dey done wid yo', but dey done lash my back same as yo', and de welts is dere yit. Oh, gi' my wife to me agin ! I'se lonely. I believes yo' is wid me, but I can' see yo', an' I'se jes' hungry fo' my own flesh an' blood, an' she's flesh o' my flesh, fur dem's de werry wuds ouden yo' own mouf, Marster ! Doan' let me fail o' believin' ! Dis yer is de time I wan's yo', when I'se in dis great misery. Help me ! Help me now ! Don't let go yo' hol' on me ! Oh, gi' her back to me ! gi' her back ! gi' her back to me once more, my Marster dear !"

He could say no more. The sobs choked his voice ; and after a time he rose and went to his house, not to sleep, but to watch until the morning came.

And when the morning came the excitement in Turley had not diminished. Saul went about his duties as usual, and kep^t his secret close until he should have to disclose it to the inmates of the forsaken home.

There were comments of diverse kinds upon the revelation of Hamilton's misconduct. Many persons of extraordinary sagacity declared that they had for a long time suspected something was wrong with the cashier and with the bank.

Colonel Bly's comment was brief : "One of those

religious lambs!" It was a favourite theory with the colonel that every church-member is either a hypocrite or a fool.

Mrs. Frobisher almost succumbed when this frightful occurrence came right upon the heels of the dethronement of her Indian idol.

"But I am glad, oh, so glad! that Lochinvar did not entangle himself with Dorothea! Poor boy! It is hard for her, too, but what an escape for him! The Metcalfs have no blot upon their escutcheon."

Judge McGann went straight to the bank when he heard of the defalcation, and had an interview with the president. He related all the facts about Hamilton's relations with him, and expressed deep regret that the money, with the exception of fifteen hundred dollars, had been expended.

"And here," he said, "is the remainder. I have no claim to it. It is yours. More than that," added McGann, "I shall not be satisfied until I have turned over my patents and my plant to the bank; I want no stolen property upon my hands."

The president agreed that this was really handsome conduct; and, acquitting the judge of any guilty knowledge of the cashier's transactions, he accepted the fifteen hundred dollars, and consented to recommend to the bank to take an assignment of the motor-patents as an equivalent for the rest of the money invested by Hamilton.

"That is perfectly agreeable to me, perfectly," said the judge. "I'll go right home and fix up the papers, and just charge the whole thing off. In fact," said the judge, with just a tinge of bitterness, "I'm somewhat used to that process."

"What process?" inquired the president.

"Charging things off. It seems to me most of my life has been expended in performing that feat. I am really becoming quite an expert at it. If money could be made by charging off, I should have been a rich man long ago—very rich."

As for Dr. Frobisher, when Sunday came, he seemed

to have grown ten years older. With greatest difficulty he avoided breaking down and sobbing while he conducted the services, and his brief sermon upon the text "Walk circumspectly, not as fools," moved the congregation as it had not been moved by him for many a year.

There was a vacant pew in the church that morning, and the sweetest voice that had ever been heard in the sanctuary would never again be heard there by the worshippers.

Dr. Frobisher felt that he must leave Turley. He began to form the notion that he might find a better field in the far-away new West, but Mrs. Frobisher discouraged the thought.

"The West," she said, "is so far from Aramingo, and is full of unpleasant immigrants and things."

When Saul Tarsel, on Friday morning, went to the Hamilton house to deliver the message that had been confided to him, he felt that the burden placed upon him by the cashier in charging him with such a function, was almost too heavy for him.

He walked up to the side-porch that faced the garden, and gently rapped upon the door.

It was opened by Florabella Burns.

"Well, Saul, what is it?"

The negro hesitated, as he bowed several times very respectfully. He hardly knew how to begin.

"Missy Burns, ef you pardon me, I'se jes' gwine to 'nquire ef I kin see Missy Hamilton."

"Mrs. Hamilton, do you mean, Saul?"

"Yes'm."

"No, she is ill, and confined to her room. What do you want?"

"Ef yo' please, Missy Burns, kin I see Miss Dorry den?"

"I hardly think so. What is your errand?"

"I'se 'bleeged not to tell nobody but her, axing yo' pardon, Missy Burns, ef yo' please."

Mrs. Burns suspected that the negro knew something of the fugitive, and she returned to the house to ask Dorothea's permission to admit Saul.

"Come in, Saul," she said, as she came again to the door.

The negro was ushered into the library, where Dorothea sat with her face white and drawn, and her eyes red with weeping. Mrs. Burns had flown to her to comfort her.

Saul entered, holding his hat in his hand, and bowing again and again to the two women.

"You have something to say to me, Saul?" asked Dorothea in a low voice.

"Yes, missy, ef yo' please. I'se werry sorry to be onpolite to Missy Burns, but dey tol' me to speak to Missy Dorry all by her own self."

"What you have to say, Saul, you may say before Mrs. Burns. She is my dearest friend, and she will not repeat it."

Then Saul told the story of the father's hiding in the tower, of his journey across the river, and of his promise that his dear ones should hear from him.

Both women sobbed as he spoke to them, and the old man could not restrain his tears.

When he had completed the narrative, he could not refrain from seeking for sympathy in his own great sorrow, and he added:

"Yes, missy, and Mars. Hamilton done say to me dat dat Injin stole de money dat I had in de bank fo' to buy my wife an' chile. Dey ain' a dollar lef'; not one; all gone, an' de wife an' de chile done gone fo' good too?"

This news came like another terrible stab to the heart of the suffering girl. She rose and took Saul's hand.

"Dear Saul," she said, weeping, "thank you, oh! thank you so much for caring for dear father. I am so sorry that your money is gone. But you shall have it again, and more, if I have to work for it with my own hands."

When Saul had gone, Dr. Quelch came down-stairs from the room where he had visited Mrs. Hamilton. He sat by the side of the table near to Dorothea, and for a few moments did not speak. At length he said:

"My child, your mother is quite ill. You must have some one to help you care for her."

"I will do that," said Mrs. Burns. "I will stay here with her."

"That will do very nicely," said the physician, and then he gave some directions respecting the care of the patient.

It was natural that Dorothea should associate the doctor with the slave woman and child in the South, and so the thought occurred to her to ask him to help Saul to get his wife and daughter. She told him that Saul's money was gone, and said:

"Oh, doctor! if there is any way in which he can be saved from this frightful disappointment, will you not use it?"

"I will see what can be done," answered Dr. Quelch gravely. "Perhaps I can help him."

That night while Saul Tarsel sat alone in his little house, mourning over the hard fate that had befallen him, and praying, from time to time, that a way might be found by which the longing desire of his heart should be gratified, there was a rap upon his door.

He arose and opened it, and Becky Slifer came in. He knew who she was, but he had never spoken to her. He could not imagine what was the nature of her errand on this evening.

Becky placed a chair by the side of the fire where she could look into his face, and after a few words of greeting had passed between them, she said:

"Dey sez yo' los' de money yo' was savin' to buy yo' wife?"

"Yes, kinder los' it."

"Well, I'se glad yo' los' it."

"Glad, yo' nigger! Why's yo' glad?"

"Kase de man who owns yo' wife ain't no right to own her. He ain't yearned none o' yo' money. Yo' doan' pay him a dollar!"

"Got no dollar to pay him, dat's de on'y reason."

"Yo' doan' pay him none ef yo' had a million. Wheffo' you wan' him to tech it? Yo' pay him nuffin'!" said Becky.

"How, den, is I gwine to git her? I'se jes' crazy wild fo' her."

"Becky Slifer 'll get her fo' yo'. Whar she live."

"Down in Gawgia."

"Whar 'bouts in Gawgia?"

"Nigh to Avison, on Jedge Beckersteth's plantation."

"I knows him."

"My liddle gal down dere, too."

"How ol' yo' gal?"

"'Bout fo'teen, I reckon."

"Is yo' wife a strong woman?"

"Dat's what I think. I ain' seen her fo' de longes' while."

"What's her name?"

"Phoebe, an' de gal she's named Liddy."

"I'll git 'em."

"How yo' gwine to git 'em, woman?"

"Doan' yo' bodder 'bout it. Yo' has yo' wife an' gal in less 'n two weeks, sho'."

"Yo' gwine to run 'em off?"

"Unnergroun' Railroad, man! I'se a wukkin' fo' it; an' doin' de wuk, too," said Becky, with exultation. "I'se run off twelve niggers sence Chewsday a week, an' I'll fetch yourn."

"Dat's too good to be de truf," said Saul, mournfully, shaking his head.

"Werry well," said Becky, rising to go, "on'y yo' jes' keep yo' mouf shet, an' dey'll be yer befo' two weeks is gone. Min' what I say: yo' gits a letter from me. Doan' yo' show it to no white man. Git Ephr'im Slocum to read it fo' yo'. Den yo' git a wagon an' come in a hurry down yer to Robinson's below de Broad Axe. Dare you'll fin' 'em. Yo' understan'?"

And as Becky took her leave, Saul returned to his seat with a new hope in his soul.

CHAPTER XXVI

LOVE, THE CONSOLER

THE wound that had been inflicted upon Mrs. Hamilton would not heal. The skill of the physician, the tender ministrations of her daughter and of Mrs. Burns, the deep sympathy of her friends, the earnest prayers of her pastor, availed nothing. Her heart was broken. Gentle, quiet, devout, pure and humble, the shame that had come to her and to the husband of her youth, and his absence from her as a fugitive before the law, had crushed her. The stricken woman lay upon her bed with hope dead within her, with sorrow that could not be uttered, with love so turned to anguish that the spirit could no longer sustain the feeble body. She lingered for a while, but the end came soon, and Dorothea had lost both father and mother.

Walter Drury had been away from home upon an errand for his journal, and did not receive tidings of the tragedies in Turley until his return. What should he do? He reproached himself that he had not sooner made another effort to have communication with the woman he loved, and yet, as he examined the matter, it did seem plain to him that he could have done nothing so long as she regarded her father's mandate with so much respect.

But now? The way did indeed seem open, but how should he rush into that heathen hold, filled as it was with grief and shame, and find in the father's crime an opportunity to re-establish affectionate relations with

the daughter? It was a delicate and difficult matter to determine. He did not doubt that Dorothea would yearn for him, and he was sure that even an appearance of indifference would be cruel. He thought to visit Turley and to engage Aunt Puella to call for him upon Dorothea and to discover if she would see him. Then upon reflection it seemed better that he should have Mrs. Burns, his sweetheart's dearest friend, as his representative. He resolved to see her; but after thinking the matter over he determined to write to her.

The letter reached Mrs. Burns upon the day after Mrs. Hamilton's death. She answered it at once, advising Walter of that occurrence and imploring him to come to Turley. When the funeral was over, Mrs. Burns tarried with Dorothea, and directed the affairs of the household.

"You will come to live with me, my dear," she said to the girl, "when your affairs are all arranged."

"Oh, no!" answered Dorry, "I cannot give up this house. Dear father must have a home when he shall come back."

She helped Mrs. Burns to put the house in order after her mother's illness, and with her own hands she took the clothing and the personal things that were her father's and put them out of sight until he should come. While she was carrying over her arm a coat which she wished to hang in a closet, three letters fell from a pocket to the floor. She picked them up carelessly to replace them, but was startled to find that they were addressed to her in Walter's handwriting. Dropping the coat, she ran to the window, and tearing the envelopes, she began to read the letters. They were filled with expressions of passionate affection.

Mrs. Burns found her crying bitterly, while through her tears she tried to follow the lines of the letters.

"What is it, dear?" asked Mrs. Burns.

Dorothea rose and threw her arms about her friend's neck.

"Letters from Walter which did not reach me! Oh, Mrs. Burns, is it any wonder he thought I did not care for him?"

"I have a letter from him myself, to-day," said Mrs. Burns, without relating that her suspicions had been directed to this very condition of things.

"Can I see it?"

Mrs. Burns read it to her, and her tears flowed again as she heard Walter's protestations of affection and sympathy.

"I have written to him to come here at once," said Florabella. "Will you receive him?"

"Yes! How grateful I shall be. Will he come, do you think?"

"There can be no doubt of it."

He did come, and on that very night. First he went to the house of Mrs. Burns, but learning that she was with Dorothea, he went there, and Mrs. Burns saw him as he came up the street and met him at the door. Greeting him and ushering him into the parlour, she went up-stairs to tell Dorothea that he waited for her.

Walter had strange feelings as he walked up and down that room, and looked into the library where he had had treatment so ill from Hamilton, and his heart ached as he thought how much his beloved one had suffered since last he saw her.

He heard her footstep upon the stairs, and he went to the door to meet her. In an instant his arms were about her and her white face lay upon his breast while he kissed her again and again. She clung to him as if he were her only hope and refuge in this harsh and bitter world.

"My darling!" he said.

"I knew you would come," she said, as she looked up at him. "Yes, dear, I knew it. I knew that you would love me still. I did not get your letters, dear, or I should have answered them. I found them only a little while ago. They were kept from me. Do you forgive me, Walter?"

"Forgive you! Ah, my dearest, I need forgiveness, not you! Why did I not come to see you?"

"Oh, you could not do that! No, it could not be. But now, Walter, I am alone and desolate. I knew you

would come, and come here. God gave you to me. You are mine. I was sure from the first you were mine. I could have killed that woman they said would take you away from me!" There was a strange fierceness in her voice.

"No woman could come between us, dearest."

"No; for you are mine. Mine here and mine forever. It is forever. It is eternal. I shall go first; but I will remember in the other world that it is we two: you and me; and you will come to me there, also, my love. I will wait for you; for my Walter!" and she kissed him and put her hand upon his hair.

They sat upon the sofa hand in hand, and he told her of his sorrow for her in the afflictions that had come to her, and of the plans that he had made already for her future and for his.

"But I must stay here, dearest, for a while," she said. "The house is sacred to me yet, and there are many, many things to do; and then, poor father will return, and I cannot bear to think that he should be homeless."

"You cannot remain here alone, dear. Why not go with Mrs. Burns?"

"Not now, not now!" she said. "There is time enough to determine what is the best course. And you will come here often?"

"Every week."

"And write to me?"

"Every day, my dear."

Then Dorothea told Walter how her father had invested money in McGann's invention, and how the bank had taken over the patents. And she told him also what she knew of Bunder Poot's dealings with Hamilton; how, among other things, the Hindu had obtained possession of Saul Tarsel's money.

"So you see, Walter dear, it was all the work of that terrible Indian."

Walter could not reach precisely this conclusion, but he would not deprive her of the satisfaction with which she rested upon it.

"I never liked that man," she said. "Florabella and

I both thought there was something wrong about him the first time he came to Turley ; but oh, Walter ! I never could have dreamed that he would ruin father ! ”

“ You said to me,” observed Walter, “ that your father had been acting strangely.”

“ That was the reason : the influence of that dreadful man ! When I came home one night a few weeks ago, I found them in the library together. I had a suspicion that something was the matter, for father was strangely agitated ; but he denied it, when I asked him about it. You will not hate father, now that you know the truth, will you, Walter ? ”

“ No.”

“ Because he would never have been so unkind to you if he had been himself. It was unlike him. He was suffering terribly ; but he was not really guilty, was he, dear ? If the Hindu had never met him, he would be here with us now, and mother would be here too.”

Dorothea began to cry once more, and her lover comforted her.

“ We must make the best of it, my dear. The past is beyond recall. I will try to find your father, and perhaps the whole trouble with the bank can be arranged. I know a rich man in the city, one of the owners of my newspaper, who is deeply interested in electrical contrivances. Perhaps I can get him to buy the McGann patents from the bank, and to pay enough to make good the whole loss. Then your father can come home again.”

Dorothea hesitated for a moment, and then she said :

“ You will not forsake me because of the disgrace that has come to us ? ”

Walter put his arm about her and kissed her.

“ Have no fears of that kind, Dorothea. You are not touched by this matter ; and nothing shall ever separate us again. But you cannot live here alone. Let us marry, and then if your father returns he can come with us.”

“ You are willing that he should ? ”

“ Yes.”

"We cannot live in Turley, with your business in the city; and I fear father will not wish to live here."

"No, I will take a house in the city, and make that our home. And the marriage? Where will the ceremony be performed?"

"Not here! Not in this house."

"I have felt that I should like to be married in the church where I first saw you," said Walter.

"I could not do that, dear," she said. "Not in a public place so soon after mother's death; and after all that has happened, it would be painful for me to go to that church soon again. Perhaps Mrs. Burns would permit us to be married in her house."

"That will do nicely."

"And do you know, dear, that—that—well, Walter, I have a great secret for you."

"You have?"

"Yes; what do you think? Who else is to be married? Somebody you know and love."

"I can't imagine. Not Florabella?"

"Yes, yes!"

"And who is the happy man?"

"You will be delighted when I tell you."

"I never was good at guessing."

"Dear old Captain Bluit!"

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Walter. "Well, he is a lucky man. He always did have sound sense. 'Aunt Florabella': that really has a very nice sound, hasn't it? Both of us will have to learn to say it."

"And dear Mrs. Burns suggests that she and your uncle, and you and I, shall be married at the same time."

"That will be charming," said Walter. "Now you see, dearest, how much force there is in good example. You and I have taught these older folks how to find happiness. But, Dorry, there is one dear person who has been left out. What is to become of Aunt Puella?"

"She will be very lonely, won't she? Or will she live with your uncle and Florabella?"

"I don't know how she will feel about that; but I

have a notion she will not care to stay there. Can't we look about, dearest, and find a good husband for her?"

Dorothea smiled for the first time in many days as she said:

"I think your aunt would much rather take care of such a matter herself."

When the lovers had talked their plans over and over, and settled everything about their own immediate future, Mrs. Burns came down-stairs and sat with them and rejoiced with them, and consented to all the arrangements they had made.

At last Walter, after congratulating Mrs. Burns upon her engagement, and warmly welcoming her to relationship with him, ventured to say:

"And, Mrs. Burns, Dorry and I were just wishing so much that Aunt Puella could follow your example and ours."

Florabella's face became bright with smiles, as she answered mysteriously:

"Puella? Don't say a word about it, but do you know I have suspicions that she has an affair of her own just now?"

CHAPTER XXVII

PHOEBE TARSEL GOES HOME

ONE day in the early winter, while all these lovers were planning and plotting, and filling themselves with happiness, Uncle Saul Tarsel received a letter from Becky Slifer, telling him that his wife Phoebe and daughter Liddy were at the house of a Quaker farmer near to the Broad Axe, a tavern at the crossing of two roads nearly nine miles from Turley. Becky asked him to send a vehicle at once, which should bring them to Turley, for she had reason to believe that the pursuers of the flying slaves were likely to discover their hiding-place and to adopt legal proceedings to obtain possession of them.

The letter was read to Saul by Ephraim Slocum, and then, folding the letter and returning it to his pocket, Saul considered in what manner he should find conveyance for the fugitives. He had no money with which to hire a vehicle, and, at any rate, he should have been afraid to follow this course, lest he should give too much publicity to the proceeding. Upon reflection, he determined to ask help from Captain Bluitt, who more than once had been kind to him, and who, he felt sure, would not betray him, even if the captain should refuse to give active assistance.

Upon presenting Becky's letter to Captain Bluitt, the captain after reading it carefully, and meditating for a moment, said:

"Saul, you know it won't do for me to go into the

business of helping slaves to run away from their masters. It's against the law, and I don't like to engage in it. But it seems to me hard luck for a decent man like you not to be able to call his wife and his child his own, and I won't mind very much if you get hold of them. I'll tell you what I'll do. Rufus is going down by the Broad Axe to get a few bushels of oats on Thursday morning, and if you choose to go along in the sleigh with the two horses and a lot of horse-blankets, I'd just as lief you would. If the load of oats is not too heavy coming home, and you happen to run across a couple of worthy people who would like to have a sleigh-ride, you and Rufus can just tell them to jump in. Do you understand?"

On Thursday morning there was a brisk snowstorm when Saul walked down the street to Captain Bluit's stable. The snow fell fast and the air was stinging cold. While Rufus hitched the two strong horses to the sleigh, and Saul filled the vehicle with straw, upon which he placed three or four heavy blankets, Captain Bluit came into the stable.

"It's all right, I reckon, Saul, to make this trip, but you're going to have a cold ride, and maybe a heavy storm. It might be wise to wait till to-morrow?"

"Jes' as you sez, Mars. Bluit," replied Saul, with a little sinking of the heart. "Jes' as you sez. On'y, Mars. Bluit, I'se willin' to chancet it ef you an' Rufus is. I doan' min' de col', an' dem hosses is good enough fo' de wus storm dat kin come."

"Oh, well, go ahead," said the captain. "But, Rufus," he added, "if there is trouble on the roads coming back, turn in at one of the taverns or at Dr. Quelch's and wait for the blow to be over."

Then the captain returned to the house, while Saul and Rufus, driving through the great double door into the street, took places upon the only seat in the sleigh, and, with jingling bells, drove the horses at a lively trot out towards the turnpike road that led to the Broad Axe.

There was no trouble to make progression on the

turnpike, for the snow that had already been there was beaten down to a hard surface, and the new-fallen snow was not very deep. But, as the journey continued, the snow came down in larger quantity, the wind gathered force, and the temperature continuously fell.

By the time the team turned into Farmer Robinson's lane, just beyond the Broad Axe, the storm had become almost fierce; and Rufus began to have misgivings.

"Mind what I say, we don't git back to no Turley *this* night, not if it keeps on snowin' harder and harder like this," said Rufus.

Saul, filled with eager expectation of meeting his dear ones, had a dread of offending Rufus, so he only said:

"Oh! hit'll soon blow ober. Dish yer storm ain' so werry bad. We 'uns 'll git home all right 'nough, Rufus, sholy."

The sleigh stopped in the shelter of the shed extending from the side of Farmer Robinson's barn, and Farmer Robinson himself, in great-coat and hip-high boots, came from the front door, down from the porch, and waded through the snow to the shed.

"Is that thee, Saul? How is thee, Rufus? Hitch the horses there and blanket them, and then come into the kitchen. Saul, thee come right in now. There's some one in there that wants to greet thee."

Saul leaped from the sleigh and walked towards the house, while Farmer Robinson helped Rufus with the horses.

As Saul came nearer and nearer to the door of the kitchen, his heart beat fast, his breathing quickened until he panted; there was a queer feeling of dryness in his throat, and it seemed to him somehow as if it were not he that moved, but the objects about him. While he endeavoured to shake the snow from his boots upon the doorstep, Mrs. Robinson opened the door, and Liddy, Saul's daughter, a child of thirteen years, sprang forward, and, flinging her arms about his neck, kissed him again and again.

"My gal! My dear liddle gal!" exclaimed Saul,

embracing and kissing her. "I declar' to gracious, but you'se growed! I wouldn't a knowed you. My Liddy! dat's my gal! And where's mammy?"

Phoebe sat in a rocking-chair in front of the wide fireplace and the blazing logs. As Saul came into the room she rose feebly, holding fast for support to one of the arms of the chair. Her eyes were filled with tears.

"My Saul!" she said.

Saul, almost thrusting his daughter aside, leaped towards his wife and clasped her in his arms and kissed her. She sank almost at once into the chair. Saul, dropping upon his knees beside her, put his head upon her shoulder, while Liddy came to him and put her hand upon him. The white people who were present withdrew from the room.

Phoebe stroked and patted the white head that lay upon her, and said:

"Yer I is, honey! I'se come to yo' at las'. I'se a free woman!"

"My wife! My Phoebe!"

"Peared to me sometimes," said Phoebe, "dat I'd neber see de sight o' yo' agin! I almos' done stop a hopin'! But yer we is, Liddy an' me, an' yer's my Saul; I'se prayed long fur dat. Yes, I'se prayed. De Lawd he is gracious, dat's jes' a fac'! He is gracious."

"I bin a prayin' too; an' now you's bofe o' yo' mine fo' good an' all. No mo' partin'."

"I dunno, honey," said Phoebe, "I'se jes' a po' ol' wrack, good fo' nuffin'. I'se 'fraid I won't stay long wid yo'."

"Ef yo' a gwine to hebben I'se gwine too. But yo' ain' gwine, not now, anyways. Yo' jes' stay wid me."

"I'se not wuff much to yo', Saul; I'se worned out."

"Dey sez yo's wuff fo'teen hun'ed dollahs, bu' yo's wuff mo'n dat to me. I doan' swap yo' fo' fo'teen million dollahs, no' ten times dat needer."

"Dey done chase us hard, Saul. Dey is after us now wid a hot foot. D' yo' think dey ketch us, honey? Me an' Liddy?"

"No, dey won'," said Saul. "You'se free an' yo' stays



Captain Blunt)

" 'My wife! My Phoebe! ' "

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free. But yo' can't go wid us to-day ef you'se sick. Yo' mus' stay right yer. De col' is bitter."

"No," said Phoebe, "I doan' wan' to stay yer. I wan' to go to your house, to my house wid yo'!" and the light seemed to come into her eyes as she put her arm around his neck and kissed him.

"Kin yo' stan' de col', Phoebe? I'se afeared."

"De col's not so bitter as de whip an' de ball an' chain. I done stan' mo'n dat. I want to go home, Saul. De storm ain't nuffin'. I doan' min' no storm. I wants Saul by me. Den dere's peace."

"Is yo' werry sick, Phoebe? What's ailin' yo', honey?"

"Jes' worn out, I reckon, dat's all. I'se been abused, an' de trampin' an' de bein' hungry, dey was hard. I'se not gwine to live long, Saul."

"Doan' yo' say no mo' dat yo' gwine to die. Yo' gwine to live. Yo' gwine to live along wid me twel you'se an ol' woman."

"I'se an ol' woman now, honey, an' de en' ain' fer off. I'se clar gin out, wid it all."

Farmer Robinson and wife and Rufus came into the room.

Rufus insisted upon starting homeward as soon as possible. The roads were still open, he thought, and he said he might reach Turley in two or three hours. Farmer Robinson and his wife urged Saul to let Phoebe remain with them for a few days until she should be stronger. They said that Saul and Liddy could return in the sleigh. Saul consented to this, but Phoebe, thanking her host, declared that she would not stay.

"I'se a gwine wid Saul. I'll never quit him no mo'!"

Saul would not contend against her.

"Ef Miss Robinson kindly wrap her up warm, we put her in de straw right behin' de seat o' de sleigh, and de win' doan' strike her dere. De win's a shif'in', anyway," said he, looking through the window, and permitting his wish to override plain evidence of the fact.

So Rufus brought the sleigh to the door, and when

Mrs. Robinson had wrapped Phoebe in blankets, Saul carried her to the sleigh, where she was snugly tucked in with Liddy. Saul and Rufus took their seats high in the front, and Rufus turned the horses into the lane that led down to the turnpike. Farmer Robinson and his wife watched them with many misgivings, but as the sleigh turned into the main road they shut the door, and took up the duties of the household.

Instead of the wind shifting, as Saul had conjectured, it still blew steadily and much more strongly from the north-west. Coming from Turley, Rufus and Saul had driven with the wind. Returning, it blew in their faces, cold, strong, and with gathering force. The snow fell more heavily, and the drifts in the road were so many and so high and dense that, before the sleigh had gone a mile, Rufus began to be scared. The force of the wind was such that the snow upon the drifts was packed down as if it were clay, and the sleigh could not penetrate them. It must ride over them or stop.

And the storm became more and more furious as the minutes passed. The wind, it was afterwards learned, when the history of the great blizzard of that year was written, had a velocity of sixty miles an hour. The horses shrank from the fury of it, and tried to turn their heads away. And soon the air seemed to be filled with minute particles of ice, which stung the skin of the faces of Rufus and Saul, and deprived them of the power to see clearly. The roar of the wind, the blinding fury of the ice-mist, the biting force of the cold, the increasing difficulty of progression, and the effect upon the mind of the appalling possibility of being lost in such a tempest, operated to bewilder in some measure the minds of the two men upon the sleigh.

When five or six miles had been made, a huge drift obstructed the road completely. Rufus wanted to turn back, but Saul showed to him that it might be more perilous than to proceed. The way they had come was probably closed by this time.

He suggested that the fence be torn down, and that the sleigh go into the woods by the roadside. Jumping

down, he discovered indications of a cart-road into the woods.

"I dunno whar it is," said Saul, "but dat road leads to some fa'mhouse or ba'n, and dey ain' no odder in sight."

Removing the rails, Saul led the way, while Rufus with difficulty turned the horses into the field, and then forced them along the cart-way into the woods. A moment later he felt relieved. Once fairly in among the densely-set trees, the fury of the wind was diminished, and though the ice-morsels in the atmosphere still stung their faces, there was less violence in the attack.

It was the middle of the afternoon, but the light, which was dim upon the turnpike, had almost vanished in the woods. The trees were cut, however, along the cart-way, so that, even in the diminished light, a kind of avenue could be perceived and followed.

The horses pushed bravely on, tramping in deeper and deeper snow. There were no drifts, and so the way was not so hard. On and on and on went the sleigh, winding in and out among the trees, until it became more and more difficult to see the way. It seemed to Saul as if they had spent hours and hours in following this path, which appeared to lead nowhere. He began to feel almost as if some supernatural power had entrapped them, and that they would never see the open sky again.

After a while, however, Rufus made an exclamation of joy. Right ahead the forest ended, and there was an open space beyond. Rufus encouraged the horses, and they plunged forward with greater speed. In a moment the sleigh emerged upon a hillside. The ground fell away precipitously close to the edge of the wood, and the sleigh could not go twenty feet further. Not a house or any kind of shelter could be seen; nor a light, nor anything but the dark sky, the white snow, and the black forest behind the travellers. Rufus thought he saw the river far below and beyond them; but Saul insisted that he was mistaken.

"We's los' ourselves," said Saul. "We's los' dat's sartin."

"But we can't go back," said Rufus, with despair in his voice.

"Dat's jes' what we's got to do," said Saul. "Kin yo' back dem horses, an' turn de sleigh aroun'?"

Backing and turning, backing and turning, slowly and carefully in the deep snow, Rufus managed to head the horses toward the wood, which looked dark and discouraging.

While the sleigh turned, Saul walked by the side of it, and put his hand upon Liddy, bundled in the blankets and lying in the straw. She was bright and cheerful.

"How's yo' a-doin', Phoebe?" he asked of his wife.

A feeble voice replied:

"I'se col', honey, werry, werry col'. Ain' we nearin' home? I'se near froze to def."

Saul took his overcoat from his shoulders, and flung it around her.

"Yes, we's a-nearin' home. 'Twon't be long now afore we's dere."

Mounting the seat once more beside Rufus, Saul helped him to trace out the roadway through the woods. The tracks made by the sleigh upon its journey had been wholly covered, and there was naught to guide them but the openings between the trees, and this became more indistinct in the deepening gloom. In truth here and there other openings, first upon the right hand and then on the left, seemed to tempt to turn aside. But Rufus kept on in what he and Saul thought was the old way until, bumping heavily over two or three snow-hidden stumps which nearly upset it, the sleigh stood still. The horses were face to face with a close-set group of trees. No passage could be found in that direction.

Rufus began to cry.

"Nevah you min', man," said Saul courageously, "I'll fin' de way out."

Leaping from the sleigh, he waded through the snow, from side to side, until he came to what he thought was the roadway from which just now they had turned aside.

"Yer's de place," he shouted, "yo' mus' turn aroun' agin; but do it careful. Yes, sholy dis is de place."

PHOEBE TARSEL GOES HOME

19

It was with greatest difficulty that the sleigh, entangled among the trees, was turned by the horses, now themselves dispirited. The storm raged always with increasing violence. Death seemed to be in that fierce blast, filled with congealed moisture, which beat upon the face, while the cold threatened to deaden the nerves of every feature.

But the sleigh at last was turned without accident, and once more the dismal journey forward was begun. Saul remained in the snow, leading the way. The exertion of walking in the drifts kept his body warm; but his soul was fast filling with fear.

When the sleigh swung around into the opening which Saul had found, he walked ahead of it. In a few moments, he raised his head and halloed to Rufus. "Stop dere! Stop! Dis ain' no road. Dis is wuss dan de oder. We's los' now, fo' sure. I dunno which way to go."

Rufus stopped the horses.

"Stay right yer, Rufus," said Saul, "an' I'll hunt aroun' twel I fin' de right way out. It mus' be somewhere 'bout yer."

Saul turned to the right, and went in among the trees above which the wind roared with awful vehemence. As he plunged through the snow, looking as sharply as he could in the gloom for the roadway, the verse of a hymn came into his mind, and he said part of it to himself over and over again:

"While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high."

The words, "While the tempest still is high," repeated themselves to him many, many times, as he half staggered along. His mind was less clear. The savage violence of the storm, the fatigue, the excitement, the dread fear for his wife, brought him into a condition not unlike semi-delirium.

He could discern no roadway. He was going in the wrong direction. He turned about and moved toward the left of the position he had had when he parted from

the sleigh. He felt sure, now, that he and his wife and child and Rufus would be frozen to death unless refuge could soon be found. He became less and less capable of finding the way out, but he tramped on, reeling now and then, falling once or twice, pulling himself forward sometimes by clutching saplings against which he came, and always with the words:

"While the tempest still is high,"

whirling through his mind.

It seemed to him at last that he had walked thus for hours, and over miles of snow, when, suddenly, a horse stood by him face to face, the horse panting hard. He heard also the jingling of bells as the horse stopped sharply. It was the horse of Dr. Quelch, who sat in the sleigh behind it, wrapped in a great-coat, and with a scarf about his neck and ears, but wearing even amid that tempest of cold and ice the rusty high silk hat which came into active service during Jackson's first administration.

"Halloa! Who's that?" said Doctor Quelch.

"Dat yo', Mars. Quelch?"

"Yes; who are you?"

"Saul Tarsel, Mars. Quelch."

"Why, what are you doing here, Saul?"

"Dyin', I reckon!"

"Why, man, what's the matter? Here, throw this blanket around you."

"Done los' our way; dead los' it; an' Phœbe lyin' in de sleigh blin', and nigh dead wid de col'."

"Lost your way! Why, you are not half-a-mile from my house."

"Dese is yo' woods, den? Declar' to gracious, Mars. Quelch, ol' Saul's head's a-spinnin' 'roun'. I thought we was ten miles from home."

"Is Phœbe sick?" asked the physician.

"Clean gin out, Mars. Quelch. I'se 'fraid she's froze to def."

Dr. Quelch helped Saul into the sleigh, and then giving Saul the lines to hold, the doctor leaped out and

sought for Rufus. He was close by, almost paralyzed with cold and fear.

Dr. Quelch gave him a cheering word, and instructed him to follow the doctor's sleigh. Rufus found his spirits and his courage reviving. He applied the whip to the horses. The doctor returned to his own sleigh, and in ten minutes both sleighs were drawn into the doctor's yard, where men were at hand to lend assistance.

Liddy was lifted out first. Then the doctor and Saul, taking the great-coat and blanket from Phoebe, endeavoured to raise her to her feet. She was quite unconscious. Dr. Quelch shouted for help. One of his men came from the stable, and from the house came Dr. Frobisher, who had been storm-stayed while visiting in the neighbourhood a member of his congregation who was ill.

Together the men carried the sick woman into the house and up into the guest-chamber, where she was placed upon the bed. The doctor gave her some brandy; then, after removing his outer garments, and warming his hands, he returned to the bedside and began careful examination of the patient. Saul and Liddy and Dr. Frobisher stood by watching him.

Many minutes elapsed, and then Dr. Quelch, turning about and looking at Saul, said:

"Saul, I am sorry for you; but I fear she can't live."

Saul knelt at the bedside and leaned over his wife.

"Is you gwine to leave me, Phoebe?" he asked.

"Hol' my han', deary," replied Phoebe, in a feeble voice, her eyes closed.

"You ain't gwine away from me, Phoebe, is you?"

She seemed not to hear him.

"I've waited long fo' you, Phoebe," wailed Saul. "Oh! ef de money I saved hadden slip away! I can't spare you; no I can't. Don't leave me."

"Bought with a price!" whispered Phoebe. "Has you hol' o' my han', Saul? I feels col'."

"You's mine, Phoebe. You's a free woman. God gave yo' to me. 'Tain't fair!"

Her mind wandered and softly, as if to herself, she said:

"Sweet fiel's beyon' de swellin' flood! Sweet fiel's beyon'——"

"The redeemed shall walk there," said the minister solemnly, and with moistened eyes.

"Yes, marster," said Phœbe, softly. "I knows yo', I knows yo' face! Yes! I'se Phœbe Tarsel."

"Doan' you know me, Phœbe?" asked Saul.

"Yes, honey, I knows yo'; but it's kinder dark and gloomerin'. Is dat yo' han', Saul? Hol' me fas', I'se slippin' away somehow."

"Phœbe?" said Saul, with a choked voice.

"Yes, marster!" she whispered. "Yes! I'se free. De cunnel done made me free. How col' dat win' is! Saul! put yo' coat aroun' me. Ain' no daylight yet, an' de win' a blowin' bitter."

"Dey ain' no win', Phœbe," answered Saul. "I'se yer, by yo', yo' husban'."

"Hol' my han', Saul! What's dat hymn-singin'? Soun's mons'ous sweet. Sweet fiel's beyond de——"

Saul, weeping, began with a tremulous voice, as if in prayer, to repeat the words:

"Jesus, lover of my soul."

"Saul!" exclaimed the dying woman.

"I'se yer, honey."

"Say dat agin, dat hymn."

"Jesus, lover of my soul——"

"Jesus——" There was a spasm, a catching of the breath, the breast heaved, and then all movement ceased.

"Dead," said Dr. Quelch. "It is over, Saul."

"She is looking out upon the green fields," said Dr. Frobisher, softly. "She has met her real Master."

The minister and the physician left the room and walked slowly down the stairs, entering Dr. Quelch's library.

"It is impossible for you to get home to-night, doctor," said Dr. Quelch. "You must remain with me. We

shall, no doubt, have the roads open by midday tomorrow, if the storm blows itself out. Sit down."

The two men seated themselves in the arm-chairs in front of the fire that roared in the ancient fire-place.

For a while neither spoke. The thoughts of both men were with the mourners in the room above. At last, Dr. Quelch asked:

"Where do you think she is, doctor?"

"You mean the black woman, Phoebe? Where is she? Ah! that's a mighty question."

"Isn't it the one question? The nearer I come to the time when I shall solve it in the only way it can be solved, the more eager my curiosity is for the answer."

"You have no fear, no dread?"

"No, I outgrew that, long ago. That to which every living thing must submit cannot be terrible. Think of the feeble women, the little children, who have gone out into that seeming darkness! It would be worse than cowardly to fear. Men dread death only because it is mysterious. Put a man suddenly into a wholly dark place. His imagination begins to play. He can persuade himself that all kinds of horrors are about him. Bring a light, and everything at once becomes commonplace. Death, of necessity, is commonplace. We shall be surprised, but will not our surprise be that we even regarded a mere process of nature with fear?"

"You have read Swedenborg's description of the experience of a dying man and dead man?"

"Probably I have. I looked into his books many years ago, but I do not recall just that passage."

"Swedenborg declares that he passed through death long before his end really came, and that he was permitted to do so that he might tell his fellow-men what it is like."

"His notion, I think, is that the physical body encases an exactly similar full-length spiritual body?"

"Yes; and he tells that when a man dies, his spiritual body is withdrawn from its encasement by the angels, just as one withdraws a sword from the sheath."

"Not incredible, is it?"

"He relates that, even while he lived, he could sometimes, under certain conditions, hear his spiritual heart beat in unison with his physical heart. He insists that a man, upon entering the spiritual world, is precisely the same man in form and character, excepting that he has been stripped of his outer covering, and he indicates that most men are astonished to find how natural everything is."

"Nearly the same idea that I tried to express," said Dr. Quelch. "But," he continued, "I was not much attracted by Swedenborg's description of the other world. It seemed to me, somehow, if I may be permitted to use the expression, a kind of wooden heaven."

"It is not particularly alluring as he depicts it, I must admit," replied the minister. "But the relation is of remarkable interest; and if we could only believe it!"

"Yes, if we could only believe it. I think he was an honest man."

"And of amazing intellectual power."

"But," said Dr. Quelch, "I remember that, as I read his narrative, I thought much of it perfectly reasonable, whilst much also in his descriptions of the other world was not only repulsive, but almost beyond the reach of credibility."

"He was an honest man," said the minister, "but I am sure he was the victim of delusion. But how he could have been mistaken through so many years, and upon so large a scale, is beyond my comprehension."

"There is nothing that I know of," said Dr. Quelch, "to combat the theory that the whole length and every minute portion of the physical body contains a precisely correspondent but invisible spiritual body. That is just as likely, in my judgment, as the familiar theory that the soul is held within the confines of the skull."

"And the soul does actually, by one method or another, separate itself from the body."

"It does. You and I, a few moments ago, were in the very presence of that movement. While we looked, the negro woman had a soul in her body, and a minute

afterward, the soul had parted and gone. Again I ask, where? Where is the spirit world?"

"Around us, maybe," suggested Dr. Frobisher.

"Running right through this room, you think?"

"Why not? If physical things are imperceptible to spiritual things, and spiritual things to physical things, why should not the two spheres overlap and interlap, and each be as if the other were not?"

"You think there is no intercommunication, then?" asked Dr. Quelch.

"I do not want to pretend to speak positively about the matter, but I conjecture that there is not, unless when special permission is given by the Almighty, as I firmly believe it is sometimes."

"It is not your notion, then, that Phoebe is hovering about Saul and his child, and will remain with them?"

"Not at all. I think there is no solid ground for such belief."

"I don't believe it either," said Dr. Quelch. "But what have you to say about their reunion in Heaven?"

"That I am sure of," said the clergyman.

"Sure of it?"

"Yes; sure."

"I wish I could be."

"You believe the Scriptures, don't you?" asked Dr. Frobisher.

"Yes; but they give me no help upon that point."

"Why, surely they do."

"Where, for example?"

"'I shall go to him,' said David."

"But how did David know?"

"He was inspired," said the minister.

"You cannot say that that particular utterance was inspired."

"Over and over again the Scriptures speak of men as 'gathered to their fathers'; and then we know that Moses and Elijah perfectly retained their identity, and were recognized, when on the Mountain of Transfiguration they re-appeared."

"But both men left the earth, if the story is to be

believed, under quite exceptional circumstances, and the phrase, 'gathered to their fathers,' seems to me to be a conventional saying founded upon faith, and not at all upon revelation."

"No other scriptural suggestions occur to me at this moment, but I am confident they can be found. There is the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, for example."

"The most hopeful thing in the Bible bearing on this matter; but, after all, you do not know surely that the narrative represents an actual occurrence."

"Perhaps not."

"Doctor," said the physician, "many years ago, in thinking upon the subject, I turned to the Scriptures for information, and I was surprised and grieved to find that there is not, in the whole book, one word upon which a man may confidently lean the hope that those that love each other will meet again in Heaven."

"Are you not mistaken?"

"No, and for me it has long been in a degree distressing to know that in a Book which is filled with promises that are precious, there is not anything even remotely resembling a promise concerning the gratification of the most passionate desire of the human heart; not anything. Why was this left out?"

"To make our faith stronger, for example."

"Faith! A man's faith may rest upon a promise, but what shall it rest upon when there is no promise? It is all conjecture—conjecture amid black darkness."

"But you believe in reunion, do you not?"

"I wish to believe in it. In fact, I suppose, that away down in my inmost soul I do believe in it. Possibly I might better express the truth if I should say I hope for it. I shall know all about it before very long."

"You will probably live for years to come, doctor," said the minister.

"I think not," replied Dr. Quelch. "I am growing old. The time must be short. Nearly everybody I cared for in my early manhood has gone. Did you know Parry, who died on Thursday of last week, over at the Blue Bell?"

"I knew him slightly."

"We were boys together. He was the last of the men who could call me Tom. They are all gone. But now," said the physician, "let us talk of matters less painful. What is to be done with this girl of Saul's? Will they try to take her back to slavery?"

"I am sure I do not wish that she should go back," answered the minister, "but I do not perceive how we can rightly hold her unless we buy her from her owner."

"You think his right to her is a better right than her right to herself, or the father's right to her?"

"The law says that it is."

"Yes, the law. But whose law?"

"The law of this land."

"Do you really believe that a group of men in a legislature can possess the right to say to one man, 'You may own another man'?"

"It has been done."

"True, but I often wonder where a human being who has a natural right to own himself, and whose right stops just there, acquired authority to deprive another human being of the right also to own himself."

"Well, slavery has existed ever since history began."

"So has wrong of every kind."

"And the Scriptures appear to give it some sort of sanction."

"You lean somewhat upon Onesimus, I suppose?"

Dr. Frobisher smiled.

"I admit," said he, "that Onesimus may have been a little bit overworked in that connection. But don't you think it is our duty to obey even an unjust law?"

"Not if the law overturns and tramples upon primary and inalienable rights. Would you resist an Act of Congress, which should try to compel you to become an idolator?"

"Surely."

"Why, then, give the consent of obedience to a law which denies to a man the right of ownership of his body, and of his power to labour? It is monstrous, this theory that we must assent to a doctrine as revolting,

because other men are weak enough and wicked enough to embody it in legislative enactment."

"It is, however, a question, after all, whether slavery has not been a good thing for the negro."

"I do not deny that an American slave who gets his freedom may be better off than a savage negro in the wilds of Africa; but the crime that made him a slave is not less hideous, and the outrage of the most sacred of human rights is not less scandalous."

"No doubt there is much to complain of," answered the clergyman, "and no doubt we should be well rid of the system if we could be rid of it, but it is here, and the method of overthrowing it is not clearly apparent; and, anyhow, I guess if the truth were known, we should find that most of the blacks are better off in slavery than they would be in freedom."

"Tarsel, for example?"

"He may be an exception. He is quite able to take care of himself."

"His wife and daughter?"

"Well, it *was* hard that he should be separated from them. I have no apology to make for that."

"You imagine that the slaves, upon the whole, are quite comfortable and happy?"

"I have always heard that they are."

"Come up-stairs with me for a moment," said Dr. Quelch.

The two men ascended to the room where the dead woman lay. Saul sat upon a chair weeping, and Liddy was upon his lap.

Dr. Quelch advanced to the bed, and lifting the covering at the foot for a little distance, showed Rebecca's ankle. Around it was an iron band, from which depended the link of a chain. The flesh was lacerated and bruised where the band had chafed it, and the link had beaten against the foot.

"Becky Slifer told me of that. That is slavery," said Dr. Quelch, "that is the torment inflicted by it upon a wife who would be joined to the husband to whom God would have her joined. I tell you, doctor, God will make

PHOEBE TARSEL GOES HOME

219

of this nation inquisition for the blood thus shed, and in other ways shed, at the demand of the slavery laws."

"It is dreadful!" answered Dr. Frobisher, as the two men passed from the room and walked down the stairs.

"Yes, dreadful!" answered Dr. Quelch. "I have sworn enmity against the system. I will fight it, law or no law, so long as I have life! The girl shall never go back to her master, never!"

"Perhaps we can arrange to buy her!"

"Not with my money. I will spend all I have to keep her free, but I will never give a dollar of purchase-money for the ransom of any slave."

CHAPTER XXVIII

DUE NORTH

SAUL sat in the lower room of his little house, in front of the log fire, with Liddy by his side.

"Come up clost, Liddy," he said, as he drew her near to him and put his arm about her. "Come up clost and tell me all about mammy. Some folks sez how de speerits o' de dead folks come back yer an' knows us, but I doan' believe mammy's yer, does yo', Liddy?"

"I dunno," said Liddy. "Mammy'd come ef she could, but I dunno's I want her to come ef we can't see her."

"Dat's jes' it, Liddy. Dat's jes' it. How's she gwine to be happy to come in yer an' watch us a-cryin', and can't say no wud to us? It's agin good sense. I b'lieve she's jes' a ressin' joyful in dat glorylan', an' a-waitin' dere fo' me an' Liddy. Dat's what I b'lieve. She's jes' a-sayin' to herself, 'Tain't long afo' Saul 'll jine me, an' after a while Liddy 'll come too.' Dat's what she's a-sayin' to herself in de glorylan'; an' we's gwine to come, Liddy, dat's sartin. We isn't gwine to disapp'int her nohow, is we, Liddy?"

"No," said Liddy. "No, we isn't."

"She's not a-gwine to forgit us, an' we's not a-gwine to forgit her, is we? We'll talk about her all de time, an' pray about her, an' de time 'll roll 'roun' swif, an' de love's not gwine to git col', no more dan my love git col' whiles she was 'way down in Gawgia. Didden I love her mo' an' mo' all de time she a slave in de fur Souf? An'

whiffere I gwine to stop lovin' her when she's a free woman in de hebens? Dey ain' no reason, is dere, Liddy?"

"'Twould seem mo' real ef we could oncet hear her voice," said Liddy, "but I reckon we kin jes' wait."

"Jes' wait, Liddy, dat's so; jes' wait. I'se useter wait-in'. I'se waited long, an' now she's happy I kind wait longer. Was dey werry hard on her, Liddy, down on de plantation?"

"Dey done treat her bad," said Liddy. "De fus' time after dat Slifer woman come to de cabin, de oberseer, he heard mammy a-talkin' 'bout runnin' off, so he tuk her out an' whipped her, an' den he put de ball an' chain on her foot, an' he say, 'I'll teach you, you niggah, to talk o' runnin' away. You stay right yer now.' An' so mammy, she creeped aroun' more'n a week wid dat ball an' chain, an' when Becky Slifer ready, she'n I put de co'n pone an' de bacon in a bun'le, an' start a-walkin' in de night, while mammy carry de ball sometimes, an' sometimes I carry it. We walk all dat night jes' as fas' as we could walk, an' by de mawnin' we's in de woods 'way off, an' Becky gits two big stones an' lays de chain on one an' smash it wid de odder twel she break it. But dey can't git de iron ban' 'roun' her ankle loose, an' mammy jes' kep a-wearin' it twel it tuk de skin cffen her.

"Whiles we's a-layin' low in de woods, we yer de dogs a-comin' after us, an' we was bad skeered; but Becky, she says, 'You nebber min' dem dogs. Gimme some o' dat pone an' bacon;' an' so when de dogs does come a-jumpin' ober de bresh, Becky, she calls 'em sof' an' hol's out de vittals, an' de dogs tuk 'em an' et 'em an' run on."

"Dey won' chase her no mo' now, Liddy, dem dogs, will dey?" said Saul.

"Den, de fus' thing we knows, we hears de hosses' fouts a-trumpin' on de pike, an' we gits flat down in de bresh, an' sure 'nuf, dare come de oberseer an' two odder men, and dey was a-talkin' loud an' big 'bout de niggahs dey ketched, an' how dey's boun' to ketch mammy an'

me, an' den dey'd fus' whip de life outen us, an' sell us to Texas fo' good-fo'-nuffin' niggahs.

"But we jes' lay low twel dey go by, an' den we run fo' de big co'nfiel', an' git to de middle an' hide behin' de shocks.

"When de night come oncet mo', Becky, she show de way by de cross-road ober a kin' o' mountain, an' we go along dere in de da'k, up de hill an' ober de stones twel mammy she jes' 'bout done out, an' she say she can't go no funder twel de daylight. It so da'k dat dey ain't a star a-shinin', an' you can't see yer own han'. Dat's how brack it was. An' mammy, she git a-cryin' an' say, 'Tain't no use to try to git free.'"

"Dey ain't no night, dough, where she is now, no' no cryin', is dere, Liddy?" said Saul, weeping.

"But Becky, she say, 'Cheer up, we'll git dere all right.' An' sure 'nuf, dat minute she come to a liddle cabin an' knock sof' on de do', an' a brack man he open it a liddle crack. 'Who's dere?' sez he. 'Becky,' sez she. Den he laugh a liddle an' draw us in, an' blow out de light, an' tuk mammy an' me in de back room. Den mammy she fall down on de flo', an' de man he gib her a dram, an' Becky rub her, an' de fus' thing yo' know she come to. Dey gib us some vittals an' water, an' den we go to sleep.

"Dere we stay two days, mammy a-ressin' an' a-tryin' to git strong, an' de man a-keepin' good watch outen de windy. But dey ain' chase us up on de mountain. Too far outen de way, I 'spec'.

"Den we starts off agin in de night, mammy a-feelin' better, but still mons'ous weak, an' her leg a-hurtin' her, an' so we go on all de night, an' lay in de woods all de day, an' walk all de nex' night. We et up de vittals, an' Becky, she afeared to go to git mo', an' so befo' de mawnin' come we's hungry 'nuff to eat de aco'ns."

"Mammy 'll be hungry no mo' now, Liddy; dat's what de Book sez, Liddy, dem werry wuds: 'hungry no mo'."

"So den we kem outen de woods to de ribber-bank—a big ribber—an' dere unner de bushes was a boat wid

de paddles. But we mus' git food er mammy 'll die, an' I des as hungry as a wil' cat. So Becky, she creep aroun' twel she fin' a brack man's cabin, an' come back wid some pone an' roassed sweet taters. Den mammy, she go to sleep in de leaves an' bresh behin' a big tree dat had fallen. She almos' too weak to stan'. But when de da'k come, a brack man dat Becky know, he bring us to de boat an' we git in, an' he try to paddle us 'cross.

"De current mighty swif', so, lo an' behol', when we's half-way 'cross de water swing de boat aroun', an' fus' thing we know, dere we was fas' on a an-bar. De man he push an' push, an' jump out in de water an' push, but 'twan't no good. Mammy den pray an' pray dat we git off, an' sure 'nuff, de boat swing loose, an' befo' de mawnin' come we run agin de sho'. Befo' we could git out, de boat sink, an' we all wet, an' de water froze on us, so we stiff and col' wid de ice.

"But Becky, she know what she's 'bout; so we walk a liddle ways up de bank to de spot whar we'd a-gone ef de current hain't tuk us away, an' dere, sure 'nuff, a kerridge a-waitin', an' dey lifed mammy in, an' Becky an' I git in, an' in a liddle time we come to a gran' house whar white man live. Becky, she say dis a station on Unnergroun' Railroad. Mons'ous nice station, anyway; an' a nice ol' white gemman an' lady, dey jes' as kin' as ef we white people an' dere own kin. Dey put mammy in splen'id bed, good as de bes' in Mars. Beckersteth's house, an' dey gib her med'cine an' fed her, an' cried over her, twel it seem 'sif dey was jes' like dem angels.

"An' de leddy, she gimme good clothes an' fix me up, so's I'd a been happy ef mammy'd only git well. An' de leddy say to me, 'Neber you min' dem slave-hunters. We'll tak' care o' ye an' git ye free.'"

"So, den, we stay dere six or seben day, twel mammy feel better, an' den one night we git in a wagon an' go all night to anudder fine house, an' de nex' night to anudder, an' all de nights a-movin' on, twel we come to de house down yer at Broad Axe, whar daddy met us wid de sleigh; an' mammy, she was tuk bad, but she kep' a-sayin', 'We'll soon see Saul, Liddy. We'll soon see

him, an' dat'll be joyful, an' dat kin' o' kep' her up twel de last."

"An' she did see me, Liddy; she did, sure an' sartin. She seen me, an' she'll see me agin. Yes, dey ain't wantin' mercy to keep me from seein' her agin, is dere, Liddy?"

"I'se a-gwine to stay yer wid yo'," said Liddy, "an' I'll do my bes' fer yo', 'stead o' mammy."

The old man put his arms about her and kissed her.

"Dat ye will, my gal; yo'll jes' stay right yer, an' put me in min' all de time o' mammy. You'se de werry figger o' her, anyway. Yo' stays right yer wid me; an' yo' mus' git some larnin', Liddy. Dat's de reason de white folks has de bes' o' us—dey has larnin'. Yo' can' read, Liddy, can yo'?"

"I knows de letters. Miss Alice, up at de big house, she teached 'em to me."

"Dat's might nice, but yo' doesn't know no spellin', like spellin' 'boy,' an' 'dog,' an' dem kin' o' wuds, does ye, my gal?"

"Nebber knowed nuffin' like dat."

"Yo' mus' go to school den, Liddy, like dem white chilluns, an' learn de gography an' dem t'ings."

"What's dat gography?"

"Why, dey tells me de earf is roun', 'stead o' flat, accordin' to dat gography."

"Which earf? Dis yer earf we a-stannin' on?"

"Dish yer werry earf. I dunno how 'tis m'self, but dat's what dey sez, Liddy. Dey sez dis yer earf ain' flat, but roun' like a ball. An' dey sez dat de sun not a-gwine roun' an' roun' de earf, but de earf gwine roun' an' roun' de sun. Dat's too much fur me; but dat's eezackly what de white folks sez in de gography."

"I doan' b'lieve it," said Liddy. "Ain' de groun' flat, an' doan' I see de sun a-risin' an' a-movin' roun'?"

"Dem's de werry wuds I say to Dokter F'obisher my own self, but he 'sis' dat de worl' is roun', an' de sun doan' move; an' he's a werry wise man, dat minister. He got mo' books dan yo' kin count, an' he's read 'em all clar frou; some of 'em readin' in some kin' o' queer lan-

guage dat odder men can' read at all. An' den dere's de 'rithmetic. Does yo' know dem figgers, Liddy?"

"Dunno no figgers."

"Dey ask yo' in de school how many eight an' eight make, an' de liddle chilluns dey knows befo' de wuds fairly outen de mouf."

"Eight an' eight, dey makes nine," said Liddy.

"Dat's wrong. Dat's wrong, sure an' sartin, my gal; so you's to go to dat school an' git right larnin', an' fin' out all 'bout dat mullipication table dat de chilluns hab."

"What's dat?"

"Dunno. I bin dere many's de time whiles dey's a-doin' it, but doan' see no table; but dey sez dere was one. It's like de earf I reckon; we doan' see de roun', 'cause it looks flat. But when yo' go to school, Liddy, yo' learn dem wisdoms, an' yo' larn to write, so's yo' kin write a letter to yo' daddy."

There was a sharp knock at the door. Saul sprang to his feet, but before he reached the door, Dr. Quelch opened it and entered.

"Saul," he said, "your little girl must come with me, quickly. Throw a shawl about her, right away."

"What's de matter now, Mars. Quelch?" asked Saul in alarm.

"Those Georgia people who chased your wife are here, and they are trying to get your girl; they are taking out a warrant to search your house. Don't lose a minute."

A shawl was thrown over the child's head, and she was led out through the back garden to the side street. Dr. Quelch had her kneel down in the buggy and put her face on the seat. Then he drew a lap-cover over her, and taking the reins, he said:

"I'll take good care of her, Saul, till the men go away. She'll be safe and sound at my house. Don't come out there to see her until I send you word. You'll have her back again soon, to stay. Good-bye."

The doctor drove away rapidly along the street, and then, beyond the town, into the darkness.

Saul slowly returned to his cabin and closed the door.

The knowledge that Liddy was safe so gladdened him that the sorrow of parting and of absence was overborne. He took again his seat by the fire; but, in a few moments, there was another knock at the door, and three men thrust it open and came in. Two were men who had followed the fugitives from the South. The third was the constable of Turley town.

"Where's that gal?" said the overseer, looking around and speaking with the tone of a man used to managing niggers.

"What gal?" asked Saul.

"That gal o' yourn. Now, you nigger, I know you've got her here, and the quicker you produce her the better it'll be for you. Where is she?"

"Dey ain' no gal yer," said Saul.

"What's that?" said the overseer, advancing. "Don't tell me any of your lies. Where is she?" and he seized Saul by the arm and shook him.

The negro turned on him fiercely.

"Doan' yo' lay yo' han' on me, marster! Doan' yo' dare lay yo' han' on me! I'se a free man, I is. I ain' no slave niggah. Keep yo' han' offen me, er dere'll be trouble. I done stan' 'nuff. Doan' yo' tech me agin."

"Boys," said the man, "search the house. 'Tain't possible that any o' them nigger-stealing abolitionists have got ahead of us. Rout out the whole place and find the gal."

Saul sat again upon his chair in front of the fire. He looked neither to the right hand nor to the left while the visitors explored the three small rooms and the cellar. Nor did he move or speak when, the ineffectual search being ended, the overseer came up to him and, shaking his fist in the negro's face, said, with an oath:

"I'll have that gal yet, you nigger. I'll have her yet, and I hope I'll have a chance to put you in jail for stealing her."

Then the three men withdrew, slamming the door after them.

For a few moments Saul walked up and down the little room with a radiant face.

"Dey didn' ketch her. No, suh! dey didden ketch her. Dat's a smart man, dat good Dokkar Quelch—dey doan' do no triflin' wid him. No, suh! He beat dem at dat game, he did, sure 'nuff. Dey didden ketch my Liddy, dem slave-ketchers."

Then he sat upon his chair again, and putting his elbows upon his knees and his face in his hands, he fell to weeping.

Two days afterwards, Rufus Potter came early to the cabin and said:

"Say, Saul, the cap'n wants to see you, right away. The ole man has sumpin' on his mind to tell you. Better come along quick."

Saul walked with Rufus to Captain Bluitt's house and found the captain waiting for him in the sitting-room.

"Good-morning, Saul," said the captain.

"Mawnin', Mars. Bluitt," responded Saul, bowing low, with his hat in his hand.

"Saul, they tell me those fellows from the South have been chasing your daughter to take her back to slavery?"

"Yes, marster, yes, suh, dey done try to fin' her in my house, but she wa'nt dere. Mars. Bluitt, dat'll kill me sure ef dey gits her. De ol' man's heart mos' broken, anyway. I doan' live, Mars. Bluitt, ef dey gits her."

"Well, they won't get her. She's just as free this minute as I am. Read that," and Captain Bluitt handed him a paper.

Saul took it and looked at it, and turned it about and said:

"'Scuse me, Mars. Bluitt, but I can't read dat. I'se good at readin' readin', but not so werry good at readin' writin'."

"All right, Saul," said the captain. "Put the paper in your pocket and keep it safe. Last night I sent for that overseer and I said to him: 'Look here, what's that Tarsel girl worth?' 'She's worth good six hundred dollars,' said he. 'Well,' said I, 'you can't get her without fighting for her, and I don't believe you can get her anyhow, fighting or no fighting. I'll tell you what

I'll do: can you give a bill of sale for her?' 'Yes,' said he. 'Well,' said I, 'if you'll take three hundred dollars cash down for her, and give me papers that'll free her out and out, you can put the money in your pocket in five minutes. You'll save on that. It'll cost you three hundred dollars to put the case through the courts and you'll likely lose both the girl and your money.' 'I'll take it,' said he. So I drew a cheque, and he made out the papers and there they are. Your girl is nobody's girl but yours. The Romans had slavery, and it seemed all right, but hang me if I can stand the kind of thing you've had to suffer, Saul."

The old negro dropped upon his knees and blinded by tears tried to seize the captain's hand and kiss it.

"Never mind that, my friend. That's all right. You deserve more than I can do for you," said the captain. Puella sitting by the fireside had her handkerchief to her eyes.

"Mars. Bluitt," said Saul, rising, "I thanks yo' werry much; werry, werry much. God bless yo', Mars. Bluitt, God bless yo', marster. Dat's all I knows how to say. Dey ain't nuffin' dat I won't do fer yo'; not nuffin', no' fer Miss Bluitt needer."

And Saul withdrew and went home with joyful step. His daughter met him at the door.

He threw his arms about her and kissed her passionately, and while both of them wept, he said:

"You's a free gal, Liddy. Did yo' know dat? 'Yes' as free as I is. Dey can't touch yo', or tek yo' 'way from me no mo'. My gall! My dear liddle gall! You'll nebber quit me, Liddy, nebber, nebber, twel I'se called to go to be wid mammy."

That call, if he could have known, was not to be long delayed.

CHAPTER XXIX

THREE TWOS ARE THREE

ON the evening of the day when Captain Bluitt gave to Saul Tarsel the paper that made Liddy Tarsel free, the captain sat in his library with his sister, giving indications that he had something upon his mind which he would like to impart to her. He seemed to find the task difficult. He poked the fire, then he shut the door that opened into the hall; then he turned the Penates upon the mantelpiece so that they would look at the Lar, and in a moment moved them again so that they would look at Puella. Then he got up and opened the hall door, poked the fire once more, wound up his watch, pretended to turn down the lamp, brushed a fleck of dust from the table-cover, and at last settled firmly down in his chair with the air of a man who has succeeded in resolving to do a disagreeable duty that must be done.

"Puella," said the captain, gently tapping the arm of his chair with the palm of his hand, "I have a little explanation to make to you which I—I—ah—trust you will receive with that affectionate consideration for me that you have always exhibited."

"What is it, brother?" asked Puella, tranquilly.

"Why, you see, Puella, life is full, very full, of changes of various kinds, and we can't reasonably expect—now can we?—that you and I shall just drift along here in the old way for ever and ever, and have things remain precisely as they have been. Our turn has to come, doesn't it?"

"Very likely."

"Well, then, what I am going to say to you refers to a slight, very slight, modification of our situation here, one that I am sure you will accept good-humouredly, as you have always done when I have proposed things before, and will adjust yourself to in a way that will make it possible for our home to continue to be a place of happiness and affection."

"I will try," said Puella.

"Do you remember, my dear, what it was Cæsar said to Calphurnia when he was about to marry her, to the effect that——?"

"No, I don't remember."

"I have been trying to recall it, but it has slipped my mind somehow. It was to the general effect, I think, that it is better for a man not to be alone, or it ran more or less along that line; or maybe it wasn't Cæsar, but somebody else, that said it, and anyhow the general sentiment conveys a truth which seems to me to have weight enough to deserve attentive consideration."

"Well?"

Captain Bluitt took his left leg from his right leg, crossed his right leg over his left leg, cleared his throat and proceeded:

"Very well, then; better not to be alone. I am in a sense alone. Of course, you and I are together, and you are very dear indeed to me, dearer than I can well explain; but after all, the fraternal tie, if I may use that expression, is wanting in some of the tenderer qualities that characterize the conjugal relation."

"Yes," said Puella.

"In short," said Captain Bluitt, with a little nervous laugh, "I am seriously considering marriage."

"Indeed!" said Puella, without showing great surprise.

"Yes; and while I am most anxious that my—ah—that is to say, the woman who is to be my wife, shall be completely acceptable to you and congenial to you, of course we can't always just manage these things in the way we wish, and I really have some fear that my—ah—my intended is not a person you care for very much.

But I know your affection for me will induce you to try to live with us in love, harmony and peace."

"Who is she?"

"Well, it is Florabella Burns! Now don't say you dislike her, or that you will leave me if I marry, or that you are too much astonished to know your own mind. Don't say that!"

"No, I am not a bit astonished."

"You're not?"

"Why, no!" said Puella, "I knew you were going to marry her: knew it all along."

"Puella! You didn't? Who told you?"

"Now, brother! You stupid sailor! Do you suppose you can go round flirting with a woman in this town, and everybody not know it?"

"Flirting, Puella? Not flirting?"

"Oh, well, courting then! I saw the entire campaign, as plainly as if it had been carried on in our parlour—plainer."

"I had no idea you noticed it," said the captain, "but now you do know it, you are reconciled to it, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"And you will stay with us, of course?"

"No, I think not."

"You won't? Oh, come, now! if you go away I shall be dreadfully hurt, and so will Florabella, for we shall know you are angry."

"Not a bit angry, brother. I am going to be married too."

"What! You! You are going to marry, Puella! That is perfectly astonishing."

"Not any more than the fact that you are to marry, is it?"

"Excepting that I never had the smallest suspicion of such a thing."

"Men are always stupid about such matters. I told Irwin I knew you suspected nothing."

"Irwin? Irwin? Is that the man's name? What Irwin?"

"Irwin McGann, of course."

"You don't say so! Well, well, well! Irwin McGann! You are going to marry him!"

"Certainly."

The captain meditated for a moment upon this surprising revelation, and then he said:

"Well, I suppose it is all right, Puella. You are grown up and know what you are about. Irwin McGann! Well, I declare! Well, he is a good fellow in some ways."

"I should think so."

"Yes, an honest man, *non est inventus*, as the Romans said—an honest inventor; but, Puella, he'll make your money fly with his patent machines."

"I shall control that myself," said Puella with dignity. "Irwin has agreed to spend no more than a fixed sum for patents, and I am not only willing, but eager, to have him exercise his really wonderful talent for the benefit of his fellow-man."

"Very well," said the captain, "but you will have to hold him in."

"He is perfectly reasonable," answered Miss Bluitt. "He has been unfortunate; that is all. But I am absolutely certain he will succeed with his new non-explosive steam-boiler."

"Boiler! Is he getting up a boiler?"

"A non-explosive boiler; perfectly non-explosive! It will revolutionize steam-power, he says, and I am sure of it. I have examined it."

Captain Bluitt slowly shook his head, as if his mind were still open to conviction upon the subject.

"I don't know, Puella," he said, "maybe it won't blow up and maybe it will."

"You can't blow it up; positively can't."

"Well, Puella, I'm sure I don't want to try. My only hope is that McGann—that is Irwin—won't blow up your fortune. Take my advice, and when he gets to the end of your appropriation for patents, cut off the supplies; take him away to Europe, or mesmerize him or something. The man means well, but he lacks balance."

"I will balance him," said Miss Bluitt, with gentle firmness.

"All right. I will welcome him into our family, and, I will stand by you if you get into trouble; but, Puella, if I were you I would try to divert his mind from invention. Can't you persuade him to write a novel, or to accept a consular position under the government, or to run for Congress, or to try again to get into the ministry, or something? It would be safer."

"We will confer about it when we are married," answered Miss Bluitt.

"I must tell Florabella of your engagement," said the captain.

"Do; but I suspect she knows of it already. I shall welcome her, and trust she will be perfectly cordial with Irwin."

"She will love him like a brother," answered the captain, confidently.

"Where will you live?" asked Captain Bluitt. "You will be perfectly welcome to stay here, if, if——"

"My thought was," said Puella, "that if Florabella came here, we could take her house and find happiness there."

"Good! very good!"

"And then Irwin could move his studio from its present location, and put it right over there at the back of Florabella's garden."

Captain Bluitt looked very serious.

"Sister," he said, "I wish to say nothing disagreeable. I will do all in my power to make you happy. I will make any reasonable sacrifice because of my love for you; but if the judge—that is to say, if Irwin brings that boiler of his over to this neighbourhood I shall have to move to another house. My preference is to pass my declining years in security and peace."

"He will not bring that old boiler here. He will put up one of his new non-explosive boilers."

Captain Bluitt's face still indicated anxiety.

"I am not sure," he said, "that will be much better. Life is uncertain enough, anyway, without taking these

great risks. I will see Mc——, that is, I will speak to Irwin about it. I have a lot out towards Dr. Quelch's that is a magnificent site for mechanical experimentation. He may use it rent-free."

There was, of course, no little excitement and gossip when it was noised abroad that these three lovely Turley women were to make ventures into matrimony.

Poor Lochinvar Frobisher, every hope blasted, and the light of his life extinguished, shut himself up in his room and wept. The girl he loved seemed more lovely than ever now that she had been torn from him. He had many mad thoughts of exile and suicide and other desperate methods of contending with his fate; but time brought healing. A few years later, upon looking closely into his heart, he found that he could make room for love for Major Gridley's niece, and as he had been admitted to a place in the bank and had obtained a larger salary as organist, he married her, to the great satisfaction of his mother, because the Gridleys really were distantly related to the Doodys of Quilliponic.

Mrs. Frobisher's comment upon the engagement of Mrs. Burns was brief and scornful.

"Just what might have been expected of Florabella Burns! She had no ancestors!"

All the town rejoiced that Judge McGann had found so nice a partner, and the Whigs resolved to run him for mayor at the next election. Davis Cook promised to support him, but Davis could not help saying to Robinson, the grocer, when he heard of the engagement:

"I'll bet the judge, before the year's out, will invent a machine for marrying people quick, and I'll bet it won't work."

Mrs. Potter could hardly give full expression to her joy as she contemplated this promise of what may be called wholesale conjugal transactions, but she tried to do so when she met Walter one afternoon as he was going through the garden to Captain Bluitt's stable.

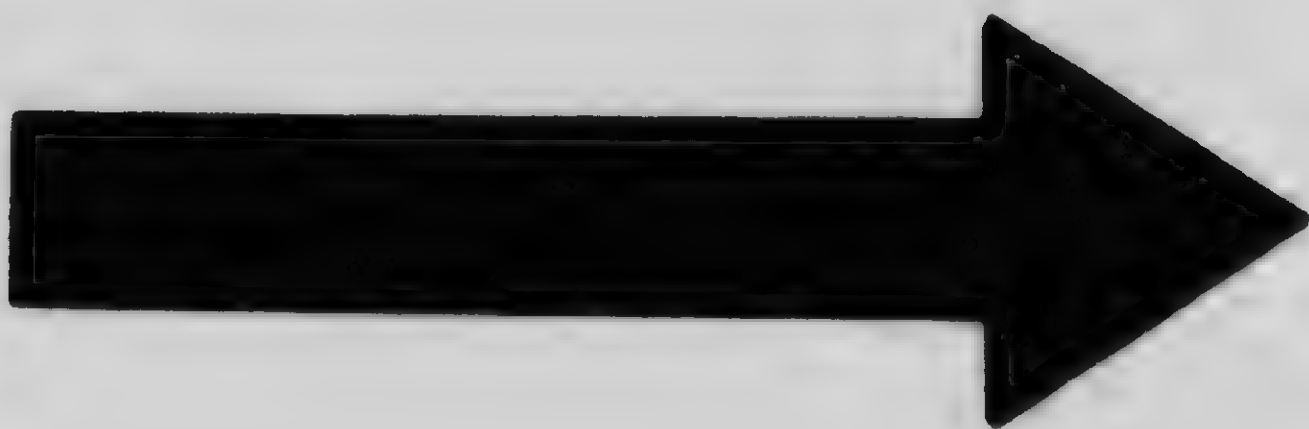
"Oh dear, Mr. Walter! what joy it is to know that you, and dear Mrs. Burns, and dear Miss Puella, are all going to boldly venture into that holy estate of matri-

mony, which is so charged with bliss, as I often say to darling Rufus, in the sweet felicity of our own married life, where I do not see so much of him as I used to, now that he is occupying a high public station in the endeavour to do good to his fellow-men and to his beloved country. But oh, Mr. Walter! you will say yourself, when you know from rich experience of the joyfulness of that blessed state, that I am right, and dear Captain Bluit will say it, and dear Miss Puella will say it, and I am sure I would rather have that lovely Mrs. Florabella Burns, who is beautiful to look at and as good as she is handsome with her kind heart for a mistress, than any other lady in the round, rolling world, excepting dear Miss Puella, who I just love and would do anything for, positively anything, excepting to give up Rufus, which she wouldn't ask me to do, because she knows, and she'll know far better when she's in the sweet bonds of matrimony herself, that it would wrench my heart and lacerate my feelings. But you all have my best and kindest wishes, and particularly you, Mr. Walter, who is going to be joined in ties that no earthly power can rend asunder, to a lady who is sweeter, far sweeter, in my opinion, than any angel that was ever heard of anywheres."

Walter thanked her and asked her to come to the wedding, with Rufus and all the seven children, and to partake of refreshments in the kitchen.

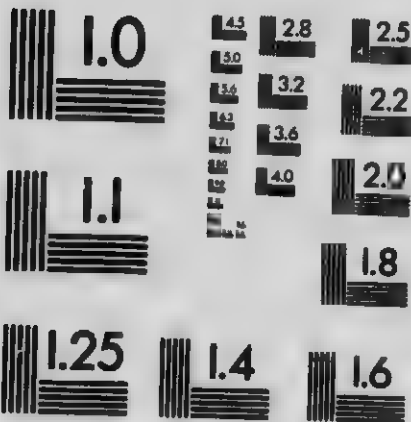
When Walter returned to the city, he had a conference with his friend who was interested in electrical devices, and examination of the McGann patents was made by competent mechanics and attorneys, with the result that Walter Drury was authorized to buy the shares owned by the Turley bank for not more than twenty-five thousand dollars; and he was to have a handsome commission for himself for conducting the transaction.

So with the help of Major Gridley, all the claims of the bank against John Hamilton were fully satisfied, with interest paid to the date upon the money involved, and Walter went around to see his sweetheart, and to rejoice her with the intelligence that her father had



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nothing more to fear. Then he called at Captain Bluitt's and found Judge McGann there with Aant Puella. To the judge he related the facts about his transaction with the bank, and offered him the money remaining from the purchase.

"No," said the judge, "it is not fair that I shall take it. I surrendered the whole thing, and charged the account off, and I have no rights in the matter. The money is yours, Walter."

"I cannot consent to that arrangement," answered Walter. "You made a heavy sacrifice to save your honour and to do justice to the bank. You must accept the money."

"Walter," said Judge McGann, after reflecting a moment, "when I charge a thing off, I am done with it usually. But I'll tell you what I'll do; since you are not satisfied to keep all the money, give me half of it; I want a new chuck-lathe, anyhow."

"No, Irwin," said Miss Bluitt, firmly, "you don't want to squander money on a chuck-lathe just now. Keep all of it excepting what you wish to spend on our wedding journey; and buy yourselves a couple of new suits too."

When a few more weeks had gone by, Florabella Burns came up to the city to make some purchases for her wedding, and at Walter's invitation she brought Dorothea with her. When the morning shopping was done, Walter took them to lunch, and then he insisted that they must come to his lodgings. Auntie Florabella was willing, and when they reached the house, and had been curiously inspected by Marietta Binns as she flitted by them in the entry, they went up to the little parlour which Walter had adjoining his bedroom. Walter flung open the door, and an old man who had been sitting by the window arose and turned to look at the visitors.

"Father!" exclaimed Dorothea, flying towards him, and flinging her arms about him, while Florabella and Walter remained in the hall-way and closed the door.

John Hamilton's hair had turned white as snow, and the new-grown beard upon his face was white. He

looked twenty years older than when Dorothea saw him last.

He wept bitterly as she embraced and kissed him, and he asked her much about her dear mother, saying he could never, never forgive himself for the anguish he had brought to her.

"And I was unkind, most unkind to you, my dear. How could I have treated you so cruelly, and Walter such a noble fellow? Forgive me, Dorry, and pray that mother will forgive me. Will she, Dorry, do you think?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" said Dorothea.

"She did not censure me when she was ill?"

"No, never! She was very, very sorry."

"Well, my child," said the broken man, "I care for nothing now but to be forgiven and to go to her."

"Not for me? You care for me, father?"

"Yes, but you will have Walter, and you will not need me. I have been foolish and wicked and unkind, and the world will scorn me. I do not want to live. I shall ask God, day after day, to pardon me and then to call me quickly. The only passionate desire I have is to go and be where mother is."

John Hamilton would not come to the weddings. He could not bear to face the people of Turley. He could not bear to visit the house in which he had wrought so much destruction.

But the weddings were celebrated. When the new year opened the three brides agreed that it would be nice and proper that Mrs. Burns should be married in Captain Bluitt's house, where soon she was to be mistress; that Miss Puella would of course be married in that house; and that Dorothea could hardly venture to go off and be married in any other house than that of her uncle and prospective aunts.

The day was a happy one for all the brides and grooms, excepting that for the loveliest of the three women there was a tinge of sadness to the occasion, because of the tragedies through which she had so recently passed.

She clung to her lover's arm more closely than Puella

and Florabella seemed to do when they came into the room. He was her one hope, her one refuge and stay in this troublesome world.

A few friends were there: Dr. Frobisher performed the ceremonies, and of course Mrs. Frobisher with him; Major Gridley, good Doctor Quelch and but two or three others. And there were some gifts from near friends, among them an odd offering from Rufus to Dorothea: a moustache cup with the inscription "Love the Giver." Mrs. Potter looked in through the dining-room door and radiated joy from her countenance, while the words were pronounced which united the couples; and out in the kitchen Becky Slifer, called off for this especial occasion from the labour of relieving her fellow country-men from the bonds of involuntary servitude, fabricated surprising and delightful dishes (learned from Mrs. Metcalf) for the wedding breakfast.

Then, when the day was older, the bridal pairs went away. Walter and his wife to the north, Captain Bluitt and his beloved to the west, and Judge McGann and Puella McGann to the south, because the judge had found some resistance in the Patent Office to his claim for a welded flue in his new non-explosive boiler, and wished to go to Washington to remonstrate. And so these people whom we have loved, and with whom we have laughed, vanish from the scene.

But the tale is not all told.

Ten days after the threefold wedding, there was a bright and beautiful Sunday in Turley, and the old town, forgetting the excitements that had disturbed it, and the passions that had now grown cold, seemed bathed in peace. Excepting that the air was frosty, it was just such a Sunday as that on which Walter Drury had walked to church and to felicity.

Nine o'clock came, and with the hour a flock of children for the Sunday School, but the church-bell did not ring. All the doors of the church and of the Sunday School building were closed and fastened, and no indications appeared that the sexton was in either edifice.

Some of the teachers and the older boys knocked loudly upon the several doors, taking them in succession, but there was no response.

Two boys procured a plank, and putting one end of it upon the window-sill, first at one window, then at another, endeavoured to peer into the buildings. They could see nothing.

Then Mrs. Frobisher came, charged full with a new and astonishing black-board demonstration for the infant class, upon the subject of the Flood. When the situation was explained to her she was much vexed, and spoke sharply:

"Saul has overslept himself. He is really too old and foolish to have charge of the church. I shall ask the trustees to put a younger man in his place.

"Willie," she said to one of the boys, "run over to Saul's house and find if he is there. Bring the keys with you, in any case.

"The children are almost perishing with cold," she said.

The growing crowd of teachers and children waited impatiently for the boy's return. Several of the townspeople, attracted by the group, or having noted that the bell did not ring, stopped to discover the cause of the delay.

In a few moments Willie returned and reported that Saul's daughter said her father had not been at home all night. Liddy came and told the story herself, and she said Saul had taken the keys of the church with him.

The matter became mysterious.

Another boy was sent for Dr. Frobisher, who had the keys to the church door and to the door of his study.

The doctor came, somewhat flushed with vexation at the interruption of his efforts to put a concluding touch upon his sermon, and, as he went towards the study door, followed by the entire crowd, he said to Elder Martin and Davis Cook:

"Tarsel really will have to do better."

Dr. Frobisher put the key into the door and opened it. The gas was lighted and blowing vigorously from the

burner upon the wall. The table and the chairs were overturned, the picture of Little Samuel had been thrown down violently from the wall, and the glass shattered to fragments, while between the wooden back of the picture and the paper on which the engraving was printed, bank-notes were wedged, and other bank-notes were lying about everywhere.

Upon the carpet, near to the overturned table, was a great pool of blood. Over in the far corner lay a heap of something—the pastor at first, in the changed light, could not tell what, but quickly he perceived it to be two human beings. Davis Cook thrust the window-shutters wide open, and Dr. Frobisher came near.

There lay Saul Tarsel dead, with his fingers still clasping the throat of Bunder Poot Singh. Under him was the body of the Hindu, strangled by the iron fingers of the old slave, and through Saul's heart, thrust by Bunder Poot's hand, which still grasped the hilt, was a steel dagger with a narrow grooved blade.

The Hindu had returned and entered the church in the night to obtain the money he had secreted within the picture, and Saul had found him there and endeavoured to seize him. In the struggle that had ensued, the Hindu had lost his life at the hands of the man whom he robbed first of his money and then of his life.

THE END

